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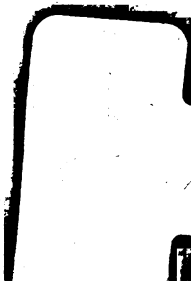

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SCRIPTURE LANDS:

BEING

A VISIT

TO

THE SCENES OF THE BIBLE.

BY

THE REV. W. J. WOODCOCK,

ST. AGNES, NASSAU, NEW PROVIDENCE.

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TO

S A M U E L,

LORD BISHOP OF THE PROTESTANT CHURCH AT JERUSALEM,

THE FOLLOWING NOTES

OF A JOURNEY THROUGH A PART OF HIS SPHERE OF LABOUR

ARE IN ALL HUMILITY INSCRIBED,

AS A TRIBUTE OF RESPECT TO

HIS APOSTOLIC PIETY.

26x353

PREFACE.

THE following pages were written out from notes taken on the journey which they record. They do not claim to give new information, or to manifest critical inquiry. It would be difficult to improve upon Dr. Robinson's "Biblical Researches," the value of which can only be fully appreciated while travelling over Palestine. Some of Mr. Williams' "Views on Jerusalem" merit high attention, and though they perhaps betray too much the desire to assail the theories of Dr. Robinson, leave little to be said on the topography of the Holy City.

Lord Lindsay, Dr. Wilson, Lord Nugent, and above all, Mr. Bartlett, have rendered it ridiculous to pretend to give new and valuable information on Palestine in a book of general travels, and my companion, the Rev. M. Margoliouth,

will, I doubt not, leave nothing untold on the deeply interesting subject of the Jews.

I have no pretensions, therefore, to make for my book, no excuse to offer for presenting it to the public. It was needful for me to travel: to take notes of the journey in the land of Scripture was a matter of course, and, having taken them, I wish to have them published, knowing that, by so doing, I shall confer a sincere pleasure on a numerous circle of friends, and hopeful that I may cause them, and all who shall read, to reflect more on the condition of the land of patriarchs, prophets, and apostles, recognise their obligation to lend a helping hand to God's ancient people, and "pray for the peace of Jerusalem." A new career of duty in a distant land has suddenly imposed new obligations on me, and I have had only a short time to complete this rude journal. I dare not trespass longer on the time consecrated to other purposes to amend and embellish the book; my tale must go out "round and unvarnished."

Yet I cannot complete this Preface without avowing my wish that these notices of the Holy Land may not be unblessed by the Eternal

Spirit; that the thoughts of the readers of "new books" may be solemnized by the contemplation of Judæa's degradation, and may hear therein the warning voice which her dust raises to the nations "who know not the time of their visitation."

Melton Mowbray, August 31. 1848.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

Page

Beyrout - - - - - - 1

CHAP. II.

Plain of Bekaa.. Baalbec to Damascus - - 15

CHAP. III.

Damascus - - - - - - 32

CHAP. IV.

From Damascus to Tiberias . - - - 61

CHAP. V.

Tiberias to Jerusalem - - - - - 84

CHAP. VI.

Jerusalem - - - - - - 110

CHAP. VII.

Jerusalem — *continued* - - - - 122

CHAP. VIII.

Mosque of Omar - - - - - 136

CHAP. IX.

Page
Antonia - - - - - - 149

CHAP. X.

Holy Sepulchre - - - - - 158

CHAP. XI.

Siloam - - - - - - 171

CHAP. XII.

Tombs - - - - - - 190

CHAP. XIII.

Excursion to Jericho, the Jordan, the Dead Sea, Bethlehem, &c. - - - - - 197

CHAP. XIV.

Excursion to Solomon's Pools and Hebron, &c. - 226

CHAP. XV.

The Plain of Sharon, Ramlah, Jaffa, Caipha, Acre, &c. - - - - - 247

CHAP. XVI.

From Acre to Beyrout - - - - 273

APPENDIX.

CHAP. I. — JERUSALEM. Mission to the Jews, &c. - 289

CHAP. II.—The different Sects of the Jewish Synagogue - - - - - - 305

LIST OF PLATES.

David, son of Rabbi Samuel Majha, second chief Rabbi of Jerusalem - - - - *Frontispiece.*

The Golden Gate, Jerusalem - - - *Title*

Gethsemane - - - - *to face* 177

Women of Nazareth - - - - 262

SCRIPTURE LANDS,

&c. &c.

CHAPTER I.

BEYROUT.

I STOOD by an aged tombstone and studied its time-worn inscription. It had been, I knew, of old the memorial of some Norman abbot, but the footsteps of centuries had well nigh obliterated all trace of this its ancient object. So, as stone was scarce in that place, the illegible monument was used anew for a yeoman of the time of Charles II. Still remorseless time made indistinct the catalogue of virtues, the weeping cherubs, and the doggrel verse, and a poor stranger dying in his journey, the village mason carved again upon the stones' uneven face this stranger's name and age. This, thought I, is a

picture of the land of Israel. The only thing which we can trace in it distinctly is the name of the present occupier of the adjacent grave, the past characters and ornaments are so mingled and blended even with the latest inscription, that where one begins, and the other ends, what is Norman, what of the seventeenth, and what of the nineteenth century, has become a study for the antiquary, obscure, confused, and mysterious. And so it is with Palestine; the ancient marks left by God's chosen people are nearly trodden out, the evidences of Roman magnificence are reduced to a few stately ruins, the traces of former splendour, and the present structures of Moslem hands, are now grown grey with age, and shade off into the monuments of the nations which Islam supplanted.

I was journeying to muse over the mysterious ruins, the dust and fragments of all time on the plains of Syria, and the mountains of Judæa. While yet I slept, the cry arose on deck that land, the land of Israel, was in view, and soon I stood above, and gazed with no ordinary sensations on the snowy crest of Lebanon.

The bright morning sun shone out upon the land, and showed us the town of Beyrout scattered along the low rocky shore. There was many a small square white dwelling surrounded

by its garden, its mulberries, figs, apricots, and grapes; there was the mosque with its minarets and dome; there were the tall houses of the consuls, each with its upreared flagstaff; there were ruined walls and gateways, and towers; there were fragments of an ancient harbour, jutting rocks supporting crumbling ruins; there were two or three fishing boats with their quat lateen sails; there was an angry sea lashing the black rocks with the foam of its madness, and then above all, soaring over the nearer hills like something far too radiant and glorious for earth, was the white head of goodly Lebanon. The sea was so violently agitated that it was some time ere we could disembark, and when at length we ventured, I and my friends were covered with a cloud of spray, and after narrowly escaping a capsize, through the malice of a huge breaker, our Arab boatman conveyed us in safety through the boiling surf and broken rocks, and we stood on the shore of the Promised Land. There was no time for reflection however: a fearful scramble occurred among the assembled half-naked savages on the strand for the honour of conveying our baggage. The battle around each trunk and carpet-bag resembled the fight for the dead body of Patroclus; and he who bore off the prey was assailed by the stentorian unsuccessful with

every variety of abuse. I do not know how long this lasted; but I remember that, after satisfying the avaricious conscientiousness of the chief of the customs, my five articles of baggage were divided among five rude and swarthy bystanders, who, on receiving some directions of which I was in wretched ignorance, darted wildly up a steep street and disappeared *seriatim*. Feeling interested to ascertain the fate of the whole of my personal effects, I followed, and after a well sustained pursuit I arrived, all panting, at an old gateway, whence I descried all the fugitives walking more leisurely along the sea shore. About half a mile from the town of Beyrout, on the south west, was an hospice for European strangers, kept by one Antonio, a Maltese, and thither I pursued these erratic porters, and found tolerable accommodation for myself and my friends. The luggage was all right, but the clamours for more, the screams for "backsheesh," were not pleasing, and as I had already learnt at Constantinople that it was useless to dream of satisfying an Arab, I left the matter with host Antonio to settle, which he did in a brief and summary manner, paying each man about one fourth of what he demanded. It was Tuesday the 4th of April, and I remained in Beyrout at this time only two days, taking just

as much time as was considered necessary to prepare for an intended journey to Baalbec, Damascus, and Jerusalem. I was joined in this expedition by three friends, the Rev. Mr. Margoliouth, Mr. Hooglandt, a young Dutchman, and Mr. S——, a young officer who had sold out. Though we were thus but four in number, we required no less an accompaniment than eight mules, four muleteers, two dragomans (or chief servants and interpreters) with their horses; and we had also an Arab who acted as a sort of guide, and was in some mysterious way connected with the ownership of the horses and mules. Thus we were eleven in number, seven on horseback, with a train of eight mules and their four muleteers. These mules were laden with burdens of such weight and size that at first I was apprehensive they would be unable to continue the journey; but a little experience taught me that their powers as beasts of burden are very great, and that baggage is in more danger when the mule is lightly laden than when his load is heavy, as in the former case he will sometimes start off at a gallop, kick up his heels, and get rid of his pack altogether. As there are no houses wherein an European can get rest and habitation in the smaller villages without being terribly bitten by fleas and

all sorts of vermin, we took with us two tents, and provisions of various kinds, tea, coffee, rice, bread, misle-misle (preserved apricots), and all other portable condiments which the usages of travellers have laid down to be necessary, and which we agreed with our dragomans to find for a stated sum.* Then we took beds (not bedsteads), camp stools, and a folding table, pieces of carpet to spread in the tents, and an abridged and condensed edition of the apparatus of cookery. These preparations, aided by divers unfortunate poultry laid under contribution at every village, indescribable portions of tough meat, which we used publicly to attribute to the sheep of the country, but which I have since convinced myself were more legitimately derivable from the goat, innumerable eggs boiled hard and soft for variety, and milk from the flocks of the bedouin, were sufficient to enable us, if not to live luxuriously, at least to satisfy our hunger. Constant exercise, and exposure to the clear dry air, never failed to supply us with a good appetite.

There is not much in Beyrout itself to detain

* I think a fair average of expences in Syria while travelling is 1*l.*, or 100 piastres a day. At the inns in Damascus, Beyrout, and Jerusalem, the charge is about 10*s.*, or 50 piastres.

the traveller. The ancient walls, ruined and shattered (I am afraid we English had something to do with that), no longer enclose the whole population; and the strict and absurd regulations as to closing the gates, which obtain in many of these eastern towns, have been in Beyrout alone modified, if not abolished by the steps of civilization. This improvement, however, is owing to the residence of foreign consuls at this port, some of whom have their houses outside the walls. The manners, also, and activity of the west seem to have obtained here a more solid footing than in any other place which I saw in Palestine, owing, undoubtedly, to the importance of Beyrout as the place where the Mediterranean steamers touch, and to its having become recently the sea-port of Damascus. So in the hot and dusty open spaces which are found about Beyrout, the camels are to be seen chewing their cud, or nibbling the withered shrubs, while the dark Arabs of the Haouran encamp their tents, and lie or squat in the sun's glare by day, and murmur wild desert-songs by night. Then the cry of the camel while receiving her burden, loud, sullen, and angry, like the howl of a lioness, arrests an unaccustomed ear in the highways and byways; while the tinkling bells intimate the approach of many a burdened string of these strange-looking

animals, who look as though they had been sojourners in the land since the days of the patriarchs and the Midianites.

There are indisputable evidences in the low arched ruins, and fragments of mosaic pavement, that history has not misled us in affirming Berytus to have been a flourishing Roman colony; but it was down on the rocks bordering the Mediterranean, from our hostel to the sea-girt tower off the quay in the centre of the town, that the vastness of the ancient settlement appeared. Those broken columns, and well-built huge foundations of stones, bricks, and puzzolana, yet brave the restless waters, and attest the excellence and magnitude of Roman works.

'Tis here too that in walking through the ill-paved streets, often dark, narrow, and arched over, you stumble on that strangest of human figures, a horned Druse-woman of the Lebanon. Her remarkable head-dress has been often described; it consists of a horn from two to three feet in length, and made of silver or wood, according to the wealth of the wearer. This horn is so fixed by bandages as to project from the centre of the forehead, and generally supports a veil which hangs over the face, nearly concealing it from observation. On examining one of the silver horns, I found it hollow, and resembling in

shape the straight post or mail-horn of our old coaches, but made very light, and highly ornamented with arabesque figures chased on the surface. It is common with travellers to speak of these horns as though they were referred to in the Scripture expressions, "Lift not up your horn so high," "My horn is exalted," "I will make thy horn iron," and other passages of the same tenour. But Robinson has justly observed that the horn was with the ancients an emblem of power and strength, — a notion which might have been suggested by the Egyptian rhinoceros, or, in their own pastoral country, by the he-goat, the ram, or the bull, — all animals singular for their strength.* And that the horn was not a literal one, we may gather from Micah (iv. 13.), "I will make thine horn iron, *and I will make thy hoofs brass*," where the symbol of strength is continued still further.

M. Alexandre Dumas, however, manages to create a wonderful origin for this horn in a little

* See Daniel, viii. 3, 4. "I saw a ram, which had two horns," &c. . . . "I saw the ram pushing westward, and northward, and southward, so that no beasts might stand before him." Immediately afterwards an he-goat is named, with the same attributes of strength. These were prophetic figures, yet they show that these animals were considered emblems of power.

pamphlet which he wrote upon the re-establishment of the Mount Carmel monastery. "The Druses," he says, "were a tribe which descended from those Israelites who worshipped the golden calf; they have preserved the idolatry of their fathers, and the women to this day carry as a head-dress the horn of a cow, the poor women (having it) simply taken from the head of the animal, the rich women ornamenting it with silver and gold."* This is a highly entertaining specimen of the sort of rhodomontade which a fashionable author may venture to indulge in, in a land where new ideas, and not well-grounded facts, have been long the order of the day. There are not many Jews in Beyrout, but as it is the port of Damascus and Syria, many pass through the place; in consequence of which, the London Society for promoting Christianity among the Jews has a missionary here, whose very interesting controversies with the Hebrew rabbis, as reported in the journals of the Society, have, it is to be hoped, a beneficial effect upon that people.

* Famille de Druses: c'était une tribu qui descendait de ces Israélites qui adorèrent le veau d'or; ils avaient conservé l'idolatrie de leurs pères, et les femmes aujourd'hui portent encore, pour coiffure, la corne d'une vache, simplement arrachée au front de l'animal chez les femmes pauvres, et argentée, et dorée chez les femmes riches. (p. 5.)

The great staple article of the place and neighbourhood seems to be silk, of which a large quantity must be annually exported or sent to Damascus; every garden has its mulberry trees, and they are kept until the latter end of May almost stript of their leaves to supply the silk-worms, which are tended with care in little rude huts. When they have spun their cocoons, the silk is unwound by a large wheel, which is kept going day and night, each person bringing his silk, the produce of his garden, to be unwound, as corn is brought to the miller to be ground. There are numbers of these wheels about Beyrout, and during the season (it was the end of May when I heard them), their noise when near at hand is very disagreeable.

On Thursday the sixth of April, we started in full cavalcade for Baalbec. Defiling through the long dark streets of Beyrout, and receiving the pious curses of a few dirty Moslem saints, who sat near the gate of the city (they having previously applied for back-sheesh), we passed into a watercourse, up which we went for some distance until we emerged into a track which bore a faint resemblance to an English bridle road. At this season of the year nothing could exceed the beauty of the flowers, which gaily scattered their brilliancy and scent on either side of our path.

Under every bush and hedge of rocky ground, the sweet and snowy ayclamen * nestled its lowly head; the more open ground was decked with the rich scarlet œnemone, and a bright blue iris of fleur-de-lys, of low growth, in the greatest abundance. Scrambling among the hedges of prickly pear, was a light yellow vetch, a little blue and white veronica hid the nakedness of the high banks, and the perfume of the orange and lime blossoms was borne on the wind which swept along the gardens of Beyrout. We traversed a valley of red sandy soil, passing a few pine-trees which are said to have been planted by Saladin, and in less than two hours began to ascend the first ridge of hills which stands between Beyrout and the heights of Lebanon. The gay flowers were still frequent, though the shrubs soon grew stunted, and the myrtle, the broom, and the rock-rose † supplanted the olive, the fig, and the mulberry. The roads were terrible. I feel quite incapable of conveying by language an idea of what they were; it would be a compliment to call large portions of them stone staircases much worn, for the variety of angles, and the smoothness to which the rocks have been reduced by the feet of camels, and horses, and mules, and men,

* C. Persicum. † Cistus.

make it appear impossible for horses to maintain their footing. Moreover, every now and then we came to a place where the rain had washed down even this pathway, and then there was a good deal of jumping and struggling, and getting into awkward holes and getting out again, in such a manner that it was a marvel how we proceeded at all. I am sure no English horses, unless they had been purposely trained, could ever have passed by such paths as those we took that evening, nor would they have dared to try. At first all this was by no means delightful, because it so often happened that where to step next was a matter quite out of the reach of calculation; whether it would be up or down, to the bottom of a hole to the right, or on the top of a wall to the left. But after a while I began to have such confidence in my horse (whose appearance at first quite disgusted me), that had not this method of advancing been so very slow and fatiguing, its very peculiarity would have been amusing. As we mounted higher and higher on the hills, we obtained more extended views of the coast and the town of Beyrout, with the headlands to the south of it jutting out into the sea. Gradually the sun sunk behind the still waters of the then distant Mediterranean, the air became speedily cooler, and darkness quickly oversha-

dowed us. Yet still our guide, the turbaned Yussuf, kept on the rocky pathway, urging on his tired horse with Arab curses, and spurring him with his Turkish stirrups, making the loose stones fly about and rattle down the dark ravines; and still we followed in single file, straining our eyes for the expected village where we were to pass the night. At last, after riding five hours and a half, we saw a few lights, and a loud shout from Yussuf proclaimed that our day's journey was ended. This was Khan Hashan. We had left our mules someway behind us, so nothing was left for us but to raise a fire and wait their arrival. A truly bandit-looking set we must have looked to them when, after about an hour, they came up to us, for we sat wrapped in our travelling capotès, and bending over the fire which the activity of Saloom and Yussuf had provided. In a few minutes the tents were raised, the beds unfolded, Yussuf busied himself in compounding supper, and we threw ourselves fatigued upon our bedstead of earth until all these preparations should be concluded. And glad I was, when supper was ended, to commend myself to my Creator's keeping, and stretch myself on my couch, sheltered from the night dews by the canvass of the tent.

CHAP. II.

PLAIN OF BEKAA. BAALBEC TO DAMASCUS.

As I do not profess to give an accurate survey of every day's journey throughout my travels in Palestine, I shall not dwell on the minute circumstances of the road more than is necessary to explain the course of our excursion. In the afternoon of the next day (April 7.), after wending in the morning through the lofty passes of the Lebanon, where the snow yet lay upon the ground, and made the road to the principal clump of cedars impassable, we descended into the rich flat plain of Bekaa, or Cœlo-Syria, as it is sometimes called. This plain was in a higher state of cultivation, as a whole, than any other large tract of land which I observed throughout all Palestine, although there is very much to be done even here. The situation of this valley is magnificent. It lies between two ridges of mountains, the Lebanon and anti-Lebanon; the streams from which, descending into the plain, water it with many little rivulets, which receive a constant supply from the melting of the snows.

Although I was informed that no manure is applied, still I saw here some fine crops of wheat and Indian corn (called "Dhour"), which gave evidence of the excellence of the soil. In the tall standing corn the storks were to be seen peering about in search of insects, their long legs raising them nearly to the level of the crop, and their heads bent down in abstruse investigation of the ground, ready to seize any unhappy insect which might be visible. A small vulture, too, was not uncommon, of a greyish white colour, with black pinions to the wings: it reminded me in flight and appearance of our English hooded-crow. That night we pitched our tents by the banks of a small stream, near a miserable village, bearing the name of Abla, having ridden nine hours, the greater part in the heat of the sun. Hence, as I wandered away from our tents (near which was a large encampment of merchants travelling from Damascus), I obtained a fine view of the range of the Lebanon, ridge above ridge, the topmost clothed with snow. This, then, was that thing which the great lawgiver of Israel, he who had conversed with God himself, desired so much to see, "that goodly mountain Lebanon." (Deut. iii. 25.) It is, indeed, goodly even now, though no longer covered with splendid forests, the fragrance of whose cedars

perfumed the surrounding country, yet still it is goodly; and when the Lord shall raise His hand to bless and raise the desolated country, this mountain will surely be pre-eminent for beauty, and this splendid valley again require the store-city with which the wisdom of Solomon of old supplied it.*

We rose the next morning (April 8.) while the lark was commencing his first hymn. While we took a hurried breakfast, it pleased me to watch the women coming thus early from the neighbouring village to the stream with their rude pitchers, for poor as they were, their gait was noble, and their dress, though coarse, was picturesque; moreover, we had always the associations of so many scripture incidents connected with this assembly of the women to fetch water, that the sight was invested with an interest of no common kind. Although we started on our day's journey at an early hour, the encampment of travelling merchants, which had been all night near to our tents, was broken up before us, and we saw their long trains of camels stalking across the distant horizon of the plain, and standing out in relief against the morning sky.

* The Arabs have a pretty saying, that Lebanon has always winter on its head, spring on its shoulders, autumn in its lap, and summer at its feet.

Then mounting our horses, and rejoicing in the grassy road, we left our baggage behind, under the guidance and guardianship of Yussuf the Arab, and sped away in the free air and hedgeless plain for Baalbec! 'Twas wonderful to see our horses then, so poor, so spiritless to look at as they had been, safe indeed in those trackless mountains, but ever needing in the fairer pathway the ceaseless spur, now on that greensward in the sweet fresh morning, assume at once another character. The eyeball flashes life, the strained muscles show their latent might, the head proudly tossed in air announces that a slumbering spirit wakes once more to energy, the expanded nostril drinks new vigour from the breeze, and while he shoots along the earth, you scarcely feel his footsteps touch it, yourself just then almost as free and wild as he. 'Twas as if the memory of uncurbed freedom which once his fathers had, rose for the moment to the horse's brain, and filled him with the proud wild vigour of his sires.

We travelled along the plain of Bekaa (on either side of which I observed many villages), taking a northerly course; in about two hours we passed two large mounds of earth, on which was no appearance of ruins, but which, from the sunken nature of the ground all around, seemed

to me to be artificial, and were probably ancient sepulchral memorials of a similar kind to those of Antilochus and Achilles in the plains of Troy, or to some of our ancient British barrows. The land here was miserably cultivated, and covered for miles with numerous patches of white asphodel. In four hours and a half from Abla we reached Baalbec. It had been visible at least an hour before we arrived at the foot of the ruins, the cluster of columns standing up a noble landmark in the plain, and hinting of what a glorious spectacle that, of which this fragment but remains, must have presented when whole to the surrounding country. If I had not remembered that these ruins are supposed by antiquarians to have once formed a portion of a vast temple to the sun, I think the great heat would have suggested Baalbec as a place where such worship was not unlikely. There is a little collection of granite columns and pieces of ancient stone work, put together in a clumsy manner, about a mile before you reach the great ruins, the only singular fact connected with which was that the columns were unlike any which I saw in the chief temple. They were of granite and without capitals. As we approached the ruins an Arab village became perceptible, with the remains of

an ancient wall stretching up the adjacent hill, which is a small offshoot of the anti-Lebanon range. Then we passed a Moslem tomb, with a splendid old cypress overshadowing it, and walking our heated animals up the bed of a beautiful stream, the road round the ruins, strewn with large fragments of broken columns, and crossed by rippling brooks (so grateful in that burning sunlight), was open to us. I examined this remarkable memorial of the past with some care and great interest, yet the accounts already published concerning it leave little to be told. As is well known, the ruins are of various ages: there is, first, an ancient substructure or outer wall, connected with which are massive vaults running three sides of a square, and supporting platforms on which the chief part of the temple rises; secondly, there are the columns, architrave, cornice, and vast walls of the temple itself; and, thirdly, there are several Saracenic additions, which, however, do not appear to have materially altered the general features of the building. In the Saracenic portion a few ornamental niches would not interest us, but as the bones of the great Saladin rest somewhere in the environs of these ruins (if we are to believe that Arabic inscription which Lord Nugent has pub-

lished *), the memory of that truly great hero sheds a lustre even on the monuments of Moslem sway. The second and chief part of the ruins is undoubtedly Roman.† Their appearance would certainly have suggested to my mind an earlier period than the generally received one of Antoninus Pius. The general plan seemed to be an oblong square ; but the larger temple is supposed to have been disused, and a smaller one erected, the ruins of which are, as now mixed together, rather confusing. Six superb Corinthian columns, each fifty-eight feet in height, with their superincumbent fragments of entablature, rear their heads above the surrounding desolation, and are visible for miles along the plain. Along the crumbling walls are rows of columns, some half displaced, some leaning for support, and some prostrate, while still a remnant prop the rich entablature, and witness to the former beauty of their fellows. As I regarded these highly ornamented capitals, and that roof so richly carved, it seemed difficult to imagine that they had been long executed, so sharp was the outline and so bright and clear the stone. The broken soffit, on whose high

* Lands Classical and Sacred.

† Volney has given the best description of these ruins. — *Travels*, ch. xxix.

finish and exquisite design my eye had fallen, could seventeen centuries have treated it so kindly that it might serve to be raised once again, and bidden to decorate the temple of a purer faith ? And this was Heliopolis, the city and the sanctuary of the sun, whose ancient worship continued perhaps from the times shortly after Solomon, received here new honours from the arts and splendour of Rome, who recognised in Baal's altar a shrine of her own Apollo, and covered it with her own magnificence. The dark vaulted passages, which support part of these grand remains, are covered with arches of Roman construction, for they bear medallions at intervals in the key of the roof, in one of which I recognized the Roman eagle. But the massive substructure of those vaults, the lower part of those outer walls, whose work were they ? If the bevelled edges of the large masonry do not tally with what we suspect to be Jewish works in Jerusalem and Hebron *, those enormous blocks, whose magnitude, there are two of sixty and one of sixty-three feet in length, causes the very infidel to wonder, and the Arab to ascribe them

* I observed also here certain holes, about eight inches square, irregularly sunk in the ancient stone, which will be found alluded to in the observations on Jerusalem.

to the Prince of darkness, do not these seem worthy to be numbered among the works of mighty, splendid Solomon ?

I could see nothing improbable in the notion when I looked at those gigantic stones, hewn for all time, and resisting destruction by their very immensity. If the word "Gad" have reference to the sun, as some suppose*, this will give strong reason for believing that "Baalgad, in the valley of Lebanon, under Mount Hermon," mentioned in Joshua xi. 17., is the same as the Roman Heliopolis and modern Baalbec. It is probable, also (but I do not think demonstrable), that Baalath, the store city of Solomon (1 Kings ix. 18.), was here; and it pleased me even to think it not unlikely that these mighty foundations were once a part of that monarch's "house of the forest of Lebanon."† This association of ideas, which throws itself back so many ages in the world's history, is aided by an often-mentioned, yet highly interesting, fact. In the mountain to the south-east of the temple is a quarry, whence the stone of the greater part of the buildings has evidently been taken: it is a

* See Horne's Introduction to the Scriptures, vol. iii. p. 357.

† 1 Kings, viii. 2. Three Weeks in Palestine, p. 139.

close and richly tinted limestone, and in the centre of the quarry a vast block of similar dimensions to the greatest in the wall of the ruined temple*, is seen hewn and prepared in the mountain ready for its place in the building. So as I thought of the fourscore thousand strangers whom Solomon set to be HEWERS *in the mountains*, and who at his command "brought *great stones, costly stones, and hewed stones*, to lay the foundations of the house" (1 Kings v. 15. 17.), I could not but deem that great stone hewed in the mountains for the foundation of the neighbouring temple another illustration of the truth of scriptural details, if not a link in the chain of circumstantial evidence which binds the ruins of Baalbec to the wisest of kings.

In the wall of a hut to the south of the great temple is a large stone bearing the talismanic figure known as Solomon's seal, which consists of two triangles intersecting each other; but as this figure was a great favourite with Saracenic architects, I dare not suppose it of Jewish times.†

* About sixty-three feet in length, and twelve in breadth.

† I found on the rocky banks near Baalbec a pretty little white *Bulimus*, about half an inch in length; and in the waters of the stream, which flows all round the ruins, abundance of *Melania*, *Neritina*, and *Valvatæ*, one species of each. A little blue-throated robin ran about the ruins while I was making a sketch.

To the north-east of the ruins, and connected by a broken wall, is a very beautiful, though small round edifice, supported by Corinthian columns, and richly ornamented. Large parts of the northern wall of the great ruin were evidently rebuilt from materials of a more ancient date; and these materials, with their irregular marks and bevelled edges, accorded with my notions of what Jewish masonry was, which, however, is only conjectural.

There is a sort of hostelry at Baalbec for strangers, but we did not remain long enough to avail ourselves of it. Anxious to press on our journey lest we should not arrive at Jerusalem by Easter, when we heard the English church was to be consecrated, we left Baalbec that evening, and crossed the first ridges of the Anti-Lebanon. The scenery about two hours from Baalbec was very magnificent; the ascent into the mountains, which were here very precipitous, exposed to us the most extensive views of the fertile plain of Bekaa, lying, with its parcels of ground, like a huge piece of patchwork between the snowy peaks of Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, Great Hermon (or Djebel Sheikh, as the Arabs call it,) being every now and then conspicuous. Descending into awful defiles, where the mountains on either side seemed to form an impassable

barrier, passing along the edges of smooth precipices, where the narrow unguarded pathway always seemed to slope downwards, now checked by a mountain-stream, ascending again through a more lightly wooded, though bleak country, where the blue grape hyacinth* peeped from under the very masses of hardened snow, and the mistletoe and ivy reminded me of home. Thus we travelled onward.

Along a deep valley, whose rocks seemed inhabited only by buzzards, we pursued the course of a stream, and once more crossing a ridge of hills, night overtook us in another valley, watered by a gently rippling brook. Here I began to fear that our guide had mistaken his way; and on insinuating to him that such was the case, he denied it in such a dismal tone as left no doubt upon my mind. It was certainly not a pleasant thing to be lost in such dreadful roads as these, the darkness so great that we could not go more than a foot's pace, and the cold in this region being very severe. Until then visionary notions of a warm supper, a thick blanket, and shelter from the night dews, had kept us all in good spirits; but the substitution of nocturnal wanderings in the cold and darkness, among

* Muscari botryoides.

mountains whose inhabitants were notorious for their love of pillage, was anything but agreeable. We remained in this state of suspense for some time, our bewildered Yussuf groping along, and occasionally shouting in hopes the muleteers might hear him. Contrary to my expectations, after a long pause, a distant cry returned through the still night-air; and though it was at first by no means certain that the signal came from friendly beings, the barking of a dog and the screaming of Arab children announced soon after the joyful fact that a village was near. Never were children's screams more grateful; they revived our drooping energies: once more we urged our jaded horses, and in a few minutes our tents stood before us, surrounded by all the children and idlers of the village.

'Twas scarcely dawn the next morning (April 9th) when we roused the lazy muleteers, broke our fast lightly with cold hard-boiled eggs, stale bread, and warm water and sugar (called by courtesy "tea"), mounted our horses, and left the village of Sarai, while the air blew keenly from the impending snow-covered mountains. The great change of temperature was often very trying to me; and had I not been well provided with warm clothing, as well as with the light dress of the country, the intense cold of the early

morning in these mountain regions, succeeded in a few hours by the equally violent heat of the sun's rays (which continue potent in this country from about eight in the morning till four in the afternoon), would have proved very injurious to health. There is, moreover, I apprehend, a less acute perception of extremes of temperature by travellers throughout Syria, on account of their constant exposure to the air, and the impossibility of being shut up during the hours of rest in close and heated apartments.

In about two hours we passed a pretty village, placed in a picturesque valley of the Anti-Libanus, and having the name of Zebdani, the traditional burying place of Zebulon. Here were many orchards, and the whole had an air of prosperity which called to my mind villages of more civilised countries. Here, too, I first observed the honey buzzard (*Falco apivorus*), a pair of which birds sat tamely on an apricot tree, and permitted me to approach very near to them. Their heads and bills are very small, and adapted I suppose to their practice of finding and pillaging the wild bees' nests. "Locusts and wild honey" are said to be their common food. Passing out of this valley, all along which Great Hermon, covered with snow, seemed to rise before us far away over the nearer hills, we entered a desert

rocky district, where dust, heat, and white cliffs, (the last cut into numberless small caverns for hermits, and robbers, and other misanthropic persons,) increased very much the fatigue of travel. We got, however, into a more luxuriant valley, along which a river was rapidly flowing, its muddy waters seeming to intimate its mountain origin, and we determined to halt, while under "the shadow of a great rock," in the vicinage of an Arab settlement.* We were by the side of the river Barada, which waters the plain of Damascus, and gives the name of "Wady Barada" to the valley. We had ridden four hours and a half, and were fatigued from the sultryness of the day, which indeed was so great that we were compelled again to mount, after a short hour's rest; it was better to get what air we could on horseback than to sit panting, feverish, and sleepless in the heated shade.

For five hours longer did we ride over burning, stony, shadeless hills, or by the side of rapid Barada, by glaring, fiery chalk-cliffs. Sometimes, indeed, a little glade with grass, and trees, and

* I should observe that, high in the rocks before reaching this place, I observed many broken columns; and in the wall of a house in the village itself a fine Corinthian capital.

scented hawthorn, now in blossom, arrested our steps by its welcome verdure and shade; but then, when left behind, these fairy "oases" served but to make us feel the fierce, relentless, burnt-up desert more. Away! speed faster; though the heat wring drops of perspiration from your brow, though the brain throb, and the lungs pant to catch a breath of fresher air, 'tis terrible to tread with idle measured steps this natural furnace. And so the flints roll down into the river, as your foaming horse tears them, in his headlong way, from off the crumbling barren chalk-cliffs. We arrive at a small village on the water, pause, take a little cup of thick coffee, receive the "salaams" of a wondering multitude of bearded smokers assembled in the open coffee-house, then jump again into the saddle and brave anew the scorching sunbeams. And now, even the heat is incapable of restraining our feelings of interest, as we mount these stony hills; each would be first to reach the point from whence we hope to see Damascus, yet still another intervening ridge prevents the wished-for view. Suddenly Yussuf utters a wild cry, and dashes forwards as though he were demented. Saloom soon follows his erratic companion, and Yussuf, the Arab, with louder shouts wakes up his slumbering lanky-looking steed, flourishes his firelock over his

head, and, to my wonder, soon outstrips the others. This is enough; we all join in the strange race, and mounting up a steep and rugged hill we gain the summit, and joyfully behold at last the loveliest, grandest prospect upon earth, — the mighty vale and city of Damascus.

CHAP. III.

DAMASCUS.

When after riding some ten hours exposed to the fiery rays of a Syrian sun, reflected with a double glare from barren rocks and dazzling chalk-cliffs, the grand forest, dark with olive, cypress, and palm-tree, which stretches along the valley of Damascus, breaks upon the sight; a thrill of delight animates the breast of every traveller, and visions of shade, and rest, and luxury, float before his eyes, and drive looks of gladness into his sun-burnt face. In that noble frame-work of trees rises a picture, which, if not worthy of it, at least gleams finely in the afternoon sun, while above its low and equal terraced roofs shoots up towards heaven many a graceful minaret and tower. A wall at the foot of the mountain on which we stood, curbed on the one side the luxuriance of vegetation and on the other the ravages of the desert, and so complete was the severance, that while within all was green and umbrageous, not a blade relieved the dusty plain without. Breaks in the dark foliage reveal at intervals the glittering streams which enrich the

valley with their waters, streams so grateful to the thirsty wanderer that, in present pleasure, he almost forgets that their names are ancient and immortal, and drinks of the rivers of Damascus, Abana, and Pharpar, mindful only of cooling his throat and quenching his thirst.

Beyond, to the south-east of the forest track, gleams the flat parching desert of the Haourau, bounded on the extreme horizon by the shadowy mountains not far from the banks of Euphrates. The bright outlines of all the shadows, the clear blueness of the sky, the style of the buildings, and the character of the vegetation, make the whole scene completely oriental. It was from such a height that Mahommed, the crafty lying prophet, surveyed Damascus in his days. He feared his many enemies within its walls, and found in the beauty of the prospect an excuse for not approaching nearer. "There is but one Paradise," cried he, "and I will not have mine on earth;" and, turning, he left the glorious scene for ever.

Eagerly we urged our jaded horses through "the dilapidated gateway," leading to the city, environed by a small suburb. We crossed a bridge, passed through a short bazaar, and found ourselves in a wide high road, paved with large stones. High walls on each side shut out indeed

the prospect, but the tall boughs of waving trees, the walnut, the olive, the acacia, the date palm, and the scented orange, hung over the barrier, and refreshed the eyes and nostrils of the wayfarers. Then came the city, with its darkened narrow streets and crowded bazaars, a lengthened labyrinth of tumbled-down mud formed walls, dark recesses, and groups of bright coloured men. Truly the characters and costumes which met the eye were such as few cities in the world can show for variety. The coarse sensual Turk in his gay jacket, lined with fur, his waistcoat embroidered with gold, his rich shawl girdle, his full white breeches, scarlet or yellow slippers, and high turban or red skull cap; the swaggering Greek, in less gay colours than the Turk, but with stiff embroidered greaves, and longer tasselled cap; the tall, severe, haughty-looking Bedouin, his naked limbs scarcely concealed by the striped white and brown blanket, which hangs over his kingly form from the very top of his head, glowering upon the passer-by from his brown face, with eyes bright and fierce as those of a panther; the merchant of Aleppo, with pointed cap, furs, and flowing robes; the Persian, with high black lambskin head-dress, dark and richest silken garments, and soft effeminate countenance; the black Nubian or Ethiopian,

gaily decked with gold and finery, and often with delicately formed regular features; the Greek priest, in his flowing black robe and round-topped cap; the Latin monk, in the brown coarse habit of his order; the soldier of the Porte, in an anomalous regimental of rough blue cloth and scarlet facings, fitting closely to the body, coarse and dirty; the stately yet bending Jew, here turbaned and habited almost like the Moslem, but with less gay colours, his beard flowing over his chest, and his black meaning eyes glancing carefully around; the Dervish, with his odd conical topped white hat, without a brim; the European, half-attempting to adopt (from choice or necessity) the oriental dress and fashion; and, lastly, the disgusting Santon or Holy-man, whose sanctity consists in being excessively dirty, and with no other garment than dirt to conceal his naked body; all these, and more, pass in an ever changing panorama before the eye, and furnish plenteous food for amusement and curiosity.

We found in a new hotel, kept by a Frenchman, and styled "Hôtel de l'Europe," comfortable lodging, and tolerable board; the house had clearly belonged to some rich Damascene, and the open court, paved with well polished stone or marble, with its central fount of water, the

lofty saloons with curiously arabesqued roofs, and luxurious divans, and the cool recesses, were well fitted to gladden the desert wanderer, and soon cause him to forget his past fatigues.

My fellow-travellers and myself remained not quite three days in Damascus, and yet I think we saw most of what is interesting and accessible to the stranger, perhaps more than many visiters do. The streets of Damascus are narrow, hot, and dusty, save when the merchants, as they do in all the uncovered bazaars, extend their awnings across the streets. The exterior of the houses is, with very few exceptions, miserable; they are irregular, without outward windows, (or if they have them, a coarse lattice seems to make them almost useless,) and what is most striking, almost all built apparently of mud. Thus, to walk in the streets, and to look at the capital of Syria from the roof of a house, you fancy yourself in a town of mud hovels. But here (as it often happens in other more enlightened countries) appearances are deceitful, and it is from within that the real character of a thing is found out. I had opportunity to visit the principal Jewish houses in Damascus, and I confess that their splendour and riches quite astonished me. One house in particular, belonging (if I remember right) to Rabbi Farchi, where Lord Sligo and Sir Moses

Montefiore lodged when in these parts, is as elegant and classical as it is intrinsically magnificent. After passing through two or three small doors, at which we had all to bend, we arrived first at an outer court surrounded by buildings, and then at the grand quadrangle of the house. In the centre was a marble basin, into which the water was lazily trickling from a small pipe at the side; near this was a large cluster of Chinese roses, and all about the court were large orange and lemon trees, diffusing a pleasant smell with every stirring breeze. The pavement itself was marble. On two sides of this court there were large recesses in the building under the canopy of a Gothic arch (slightly horse-shoed), springing from the wall, and resting on capitals of a Saracenic character. Before the chief of these is (as I remember) an arcade of two or more arches resting on columns. Round the interior of these recesses are divans, spread with carpets and mats, luxurious and inviting. The rooms of the house, almost all more or less decorated, environ the square, but the grand saloon, occupying one side, is the most splendid of all. In length it is quite palatial, though not very wide; the roof is very lofty at both extremities of the apartment, for the ceiling is here divided, as the room is, into three parts, the central hall, or

entrance, with its fount, and the two divans at either hand. The central roof is of vast height, and ornamented within (like the others) with arabesque patterns painted in the richest colours, and gilded with pieces of mirrors, inserted so as to give the whole a very light effect. Large pendents hang down, richly ornamented, and a cornice of equal richness supports the whole. The walls are a sort of Mosaic of the Florentine kind, made out of the marbles of Syria, varied with mother-of-pearl, beautifully inlaid; niches, having canopies of Saracenic character carved in the simple stone, are below, while richly-painted and gilded sentences in Hebrew, from the Law, the Prophets, or the Talmud, meet everywhere the eye. In short, for the warm climate of Damascus, I can conceive nothing more apt and more gorgeous than such a house, and yet the exterior has a miserable mud wall. The reasons for this affected display of poverty are quite evident, for when the Pacha goes his ride through the city, he casts a taxgatherer's eye upon houses of good appearance, and inquires the names and stations of their owners, such inquiries being rarely out of mere curiosity, but commonly producing a visit from the collector with increased demands. The Jews of Damascus have been most abominably treated, and it is only by

the interference of the Austrian and British consuls that they enjoy peace. I travelled from Constantinople to Smyrna in the same steamer with a Jew of Damascus, who, about eight years ago, was subjected to the most horrible tortures, and had his finger-nails started off with spikes of iron, upon a plea as shameful as it was untrue. A Capuchin monk, with his servant, had suddenly disappeared. The French consul, the active protector of the Latin church, demanded satisfaction and inquiry of the Pacha, which was immediately granted. It was enough that certain lunatic Moslem dervishes laid the charge of murder * against the poor friendless Jews; the cry was taken up by Mussulmen, by Greek and Latin Christians, "The dogs of Jews had killed the monk and his servant for their blood, which they wanted for certain secret orgies." To describe what followed I am unable: an abler pen than mine is the chronicler of horrid torturings, burnings, beatings, rackings, and murders to which these unhappy Jews were indiscriminately subjected, to wring from their writhing agonies and prolonged sufferings whatever their fiendish tormentors wished. Suffice

* Dr. M'Caul has well proved, in an interesting pamphlet, the absurdity of this accusation.

it to say, that about seventy Jews were thrown into prison, most of them tortured, and several died in consequence. A brutal Pacha does not astonish us by such ferocious conduct; but what shall we say of a French consul and his chancellor, nominally a Christian, and the protector of the Roman Church, superintending the actual torments of an innocent and unresisting people?* It was on this occasion that my fellow-passenger suffered as I have stated. Now, one could scarcely have supposed, in an age professing the enlightenment of the present, that such abominable persecutions should be looked upon by persons calling themselves Christians with any feeling but that of horror and disgust. But the Greek and Roman communions, who write themselves in Damascus followers of Jesus of Nazareth, rejoice in, and even urge on, the oppressions of the infidel Moslems against the nation whom their Master honoured by becoming one of them. These charitable and amiable gentlemen (the latter of whom, with us in England, profess so often their love of toleration, and their intense hatred of spiritual oppression, their delicate

* See Mr. Pieritz's statement of the persecution of the Damascus Jews, 1840, Wertheim; a narrative, the details of which were gathered by this excellent missionary on the spot.

stomachs sickening in Britain at the sight of the indigestible oath of supremacy, or the mere mention of the Test Act,) do not confine their ecclesiastical wrath to the despised Hebrews, but have caused our consul (Mr. Wood) an immensity of trouble to secure a whole skin and a quiet life to the few Protestant converts made by the missionaries in Damascus. No sooner does a Greek convert to the Protestant faith cease to frequent the ceremonies of his former communion, than down come the ecclesiastical superiors of the forsaken faith, and raise a mob of Turks and a pious rabble of their own persuasion, who, after threatening the deserter with the effects of their holy indignation, proceed, if unsucessful, to use the substantial chastisement of the bamboo. After some such act of lively discipline, our consul, besieged with the entreaties of the ill-used converts, applied to the Porte, which gave a favourable reply for the Protestants; but unfortunately directions were given to the Pacha simply to protect "the Christians." The Pacha observed that it was already his intention to protect Christians, but that he could not construe the order from the Porte into an authority to allow another sect of Christians to be formed. As the real intention of the Sultan was well known to be the protection of these very proselytes (for

whose benefit, indeed, the application had been made), the Pacha's resolution roused the English consul, who after a tedious struggle, and solely under the threat that he would appeal to his government at home, obtained the necessary protection. Such is (as I was credibly informed) the mode of obtaining and executing justice in the dominions of the Turk, and it is not too much to say that any country under such a rule must sink into a state of idleness, ignorance, and poverty.

I may state here that my friends and I were fortunate enough to obtain a sight of a most interesting Jewish manuscript. It is a copy of the Law, reputed to have been written by a learned rabbi in the tenth century, although it seems to bear the marks of having been executed at two distinct periods at least. There are illuminated borders, and occasionally whole pages occupied with a pattern in arabesque, containing one eminent sentence. These are most beautifully drawn in gold and colours, and the choice of patterns, or rather the invention of them, and combination of forms (rarely, if ever, representing any *natural* object), certainly shows a very high state of skill. Mr. Owen Jones, even with the Alhambra for his theme, has not produced any thing so original and rich. Knots and chains in compli-

cated folds form a prominent feature in these designs, and I fancied I could trace in many of them a great likeness to the rich painted windows of the Byzantine style, which about a century after were so generally diffused throughout Europe. There is in one page an attempt to represent the vessels of the Jewish temple, but they are merely gilded outlines. A large part of the volume is adorned by a border of an ornamental pattern, formed by a commentary on the text, written in letters almost microscopic, more curious and difficult of execution than pleasing to the eye. The whole is written on vellum, and seems in excellent preservation. In the cupboard wherein it is deposited were several very richly adorned cases, containing the rolls of the Law. They were apparently of silver, very highly chased. The Jews of Damascus seem, on the whole, more wealthy than any I saw in the East, and they are also a very good-looking people. They dress more like the inhabitants of the country than those of Constantinople or Jerusalem, yet the women have the same high white head-dress. I saw one Jewish lady with a very curious cap, like an inverted hen's nest on her head, from which hung down behind, for about a yard and a half, some thirty thin tails or plaits of hair, giving the wearer a most singular appearance. The per-

sonal resemblance of many of these Asiatic Jews (or rather Spanish Jews living in Asia) is quite extraordinary, and in Smyrna and Damascus was generally sufficient for me to distinguish them from other people, though their dress did not indicate any difference. It is altogether a different cast of features from that of the Polish, Prussian, or English Jews, and very superior. Yet we met in Damascus with a Polish Jewish family * where the daughter was certainly beautiful. When my friend Mr. Margoliouth and myself entered the room, the female part of the family were busily engaged (as, indeed, we found all the Jewish families here) in preparing for the passover, and the beautiful Hannah sat not ungracefully among a heap of gay clothing, with which she was in some way occupied with a needle. Her mother and aunt rose and courteously received us, apologising greatly for the disorderly state of the house. But Hannah rose not, and continued to work, and every now and then glanced curiously at us from her large black eyes, till the conversation turning to family matters, she was referred to. Now it happened that there stood in a corner of

* I saw the Jewish lady "Esther," whom Mrs. Romer mentions as one of the chief beauties of Damascus. Time and distress have, however, graven on her cheek their sign-manual, and she is no longer beautiful.

this lofty room a curious pair of clogs or pattens, having high props under the toe and heel, and beautifully inlaid with mother-of-pearl. These my friend espied, and, with some curiosity, demanded their use. They were Hannah's holiday clogs, the mother said, and on great days of rejoicing she wore them; would we like to see her put them on? Of course we would, if it were not too much trouble. The damsel blushed a good deal, but rose and equipped her pretty small feet in these queer-looking things, which certainly seemed monstrously out of character. But the worst was yet to come. My friend was too well pleased with this odd part of Jewish costume, not to desire to have a picture of it. If I would be so kind, I was to sketch the blushing and yet laughing Hannah. I am neither a Reynolds nor a Grant, and so I said, and made all sorts of excuses, my pencil-point was broken, — I had only my small sketch-book with me. I had —— it was of no use. There was a brief pause in the conversation; the fair Jewess changed her position repeatedly, and I made violent use of Indian rubber. "'Tis not a good likeness," said Mr. M. "Didn't I tell you?" answered I. The ladies examined, and shook their heads ambiguously. There was but one way to regain their good opinion, and that was to utter a compliment.

I tried. "Tell the fair Hannah," said I to M., "that were I the best of painters, I could not approach the beauty of the original." "That will do very well, *your compliment is better than your picture.*" We visited several other Jewish houses where there were handsome women; but many of them adopt the vile custom of painting the eyebrows, and extending them until they nearly meet, and drawing a dark line along the under side of the orbit of the eye. They also, on grand occasions, put as many jewels and ornaments as they can all over their head (Cant. i. 10.), and arms, and girdle. I suppose Jezebel painted her face and attired her head in this fashion; and I strongly recommend it to the attention of our own modistes, for it has every requisite which the taste of our age requires, being antique, expensive, and withal very frightful.

I was here first made practically acquainted with the custom of these modern Jews in respect of their marriages. In the house of a Jew, coffee and pipes were presented to us by a wretched sickly scrofulous-looking lad of about fourteen years of age. This unfortunate, the Jew told us was his son, who had been more than a year married. I saw in the course of my journey many similar cases, and a friend of mine was shown at Tiberias a husband of the mature age

of ten. Of course the whole match is an affair settled by the parents, and the misery which must, ay! and does, accrue to the poor victims of this system, is quite painful to reflect upon. The children thus married live some years in the house of the father of the husband.

The chief rabbi of Damascus, upon whom we called, we found to be a shrewd man, and not undignified in his manners. He told us, with some pride, that he was born an English subject at Gibraltar, talked Italian with readiness, and smoked a cigar, which one of our party gave him, as an evidence of his acquaintance with European habits, lighting it previously at the wrong end. He argued with Mr. M. on the divine authority of the Talmud with spirit, and yet without asperity.

While among these Jews one incident touched me; it was the gratitude they displayed for the kindness (slight though it was) shown to them by the British nation. When one of them was told we were English, and we spoke of the sympathy which some Britons felt when they heard of their persecutions; he said, "I know it, the English are our friends indeed, they always help us." I own the pleasure it gave me to feel that my nation was a helper of the friendless; but this was increased twenty-fold when I remem-

bered who these friendless beings were — the descendants of a people chosen by God himself, whose are the fathers, the inspired penmen of our rule of faith; of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came; and for whose salvation St. Paul was almost ready, had it been possible, to peril his own (Rom. ix. 3.). It is a glorious task to rescue the oppressed, irrespective of his condition or opinions. This the sages of old Greece and Rome lauded and dreamt of; for this the spear of chivalry was couched. But to shield the children of Abraham from the injustice of the Moslem, or the machination of idolaters, who stain the name without practising the doctrines of Christ, this honour has been hitherto pre-eminently given to us. May we be ready always to accept this honour, and may such be the feeling of all good and true Britons.

The bazaars of Damascus, although inferior to those of Constantinople, are still interesting and splendid. Silken dresses of the richest kind, and most varied hues, are to be purchased at a cheap rate; but the dazzling embroidery of Stamboul is not found here, save in small pieces. The arms for which this city was once so celebrated, are now supplanted, in the world's estimation, by the European manufactures of Sheffield and Birmingham, and the assortment of

such articles is neither great nor beautiful. Most of the bazaars are in long arched passages, narrow and ill paved, nowithstanding which horses, and mules, and camels thread their way with awkward burdens through the midst of the confusion. There are several baths leading out of the bazaars, and in one of them a very beautiful khan or building, for the accommodation of travelling merchants, which has a fine central dome, with two tiers of arched passages running round, and a large cistern of water in the centre. The whole is built of alternate layers of black and white stone or marble, and as the windows are small and glazed with thick nodules of glass (such as were adopted in the new hall at Lincoln's Inn), the effect is cool and delightful. The outer door is a handsome specimen of Damasco-Saracenic architecture.

The mosques of Damascus do not generally contain any thing remarkable in their exterior. My survey of them was, it is true, a hurried and perhaps cursory one, yet I could hear of nothing of note, nor did I meet with any thing of that architectural grandeur or beauty which distinguishes Constantinople. The minarets have none of that lightness and symmetry which I admired in the Levant, but are generally heavy at the top, with frequently a globular, not a pointed

termination, the gallery for the muezzin being protected by a wooden roof from the rays of the sun; the whole is often made in layers of differently tinted stones, or painted to imitate them.

Damascus is entirely a Saracenic city. In the time of Abraham, 1900 years before the Christian era, it was a place apparently of some note; at least another place is mentioned and identified by the sacred penman by its vicinity to Damascus (Gen. xiv. 15.); and the steward of Abraham's house, Eliezer, was a Damascene. (We must note here that the expressions in Gen. xv. 2, and 3. are not inconsistent in the Hebrew, where, "one born in my house," would be better rendered, "one brought up in my house," as Hebrew scholars have assured me.) This does not preclude Eliezer's having been born in Abraham's household, while Abraham was at Damascus, where Josephus tells us, on the authority of Nicolaus, he resided a long time in the style, and perhaps with the authority, of a king (*Antiquities*, vii. 2.), and that a village near Damascus was called after him, "The Habitation of Abram." In the time of David, the Syrians of Damascus allied themselves with Hadadezer, king Zobah, against that warlike monarch, but David killed twenty-two thousand of them, and

put garrisons in Syria (2 Sam. viii. 5, 6.), and obtained tribute from the Syro-Damascenes (1 Chron. xviii. 6.); but on Solomon's falling away, Rezin, a servant of Hadadezer, who had gathered together (as I suppose) the remnant of the army which David vanquished, went to Damascus, and assumed supreme authority there, continuing a mischievous adversary to Solomon during all the remainder of that monarch's life: using, as it appears, his influence and power, as king of Syria, to show his personal hatred of Israel (1 Kings, xi. 23—25.).

In the quarrel between Baasha, king of Israel, and Asa, king of Judah, we find the latter purchasing troops of Benhadad, king of Syria, who lived at Damascus (1 Kings, xv. 16—20.). Fifty years after this, Damascus continued a royal residence under another Benhadad, who is famous in Bible history, in the First and Second Book of Kings. Overthrown by Ahab, or rather by the Almighty, (who punished the audacity of the Syrians, for deeming Him only a God of the hills,) Benhadad obtained a pardon from Ahab by promising, among other things, to make streets for the king of Samaria in Damascus. Whether this meant more than calling streets after such names as Ahab should desire, I cannot conjecture.

The prophet Elijah was about this time sent into the wilderness of Damascus, with a divine injunction to anoint Hazael king over Syria.

During our stay at Damascus we rode one morning to the village of Gerba orJerba, about an hour north of Damascus, though still in the forest. In an old synagogue there, built with aisles not unlike one of our own plainer Norman churches, is a crypt or cavern, into which persons may descend through a small perpendicular hole. The great advantage of descending with a lighted taper, dropping its wax scalding hot upon the fingers, was not made evident enough to me to tempt me to descend. My friends who did so assured me that there was nothing to be seen, save the usual collection of autographs which distinguishes such places; among others, that of the late bishop of Jerusalem, and other noted men who had visited this place. The tradition, that in this cave Elijah remained hid while in the wilderness of Damascus, I found difficult to respect, while I was informed upon the same authority that a small railed square piece of ground, not twenty yards from the cave's mouth, was the spot where Jehu was anointed king over Israel. Of course the event intended was the anointing of Hazael king over Syria, which was commanded of God, the positive execution whereof

(though we may infer it) we do not read (1 Kings, xix. 15.), for Jehu was anointed by a messenger of *Elisha* in *Ramoth-Gilead* (2 Kings, ix.). But, perhaps, it may be intended by the believers of the tradition to refer to Elisha's meeting with Hazael, when sent from Benhadad at Damascus to inquire concerning that king's recovery, for there certainly it was that Elisha intimated to Hazael the fact, that he was destined to rule over Syria (2 Kings, viii. 1—15.). Yet the notion of so vague a locality being handed down from the days of Elijah is of course absurd. In our route to Jerba we passed over a beautiful stream, supposed to be the ancient Abana, one of those rivers of Damascus whose superiority to the waters of Israel Naaman the Syrian, Benhadad's chief captain, so angrily asserted, when Elisha attacked his pride, by bidding him wash seven times in Jordan. In truth, these rivers of Damascus are very precious and beautiful in a land of deserts and heat, and had it not been an ebullition of mortified pride, Naaman's praise of them might have passed with us for a patriotic love of the rivers of his own nation. While I was in that country both the Barada, and all the other rivers of Damascus were somewhat muddy and discoloured by reason of the rapidity of their currents.

The characters of Elijah and Elisha have always occupied much of the attention and admiration of all students of Scripture history. Judah and Israel, often at war with one another and with their neighbours the Syrians, when worsted, went to their common enemy, and so kept the whole of Palestine in a constant state of ferment. Amidst perjured courts and idolatrous nations, while murder, injustice, and rapine seemed to hold dominion from the palace to the hut, the eye catches sight of a solitary figure, righteous and unflinching, the courageous and faithful exponent of the anger of God, and the stern rebuker of the very king on his throne. The wrath of the mighty, the misery of the land, may obscure for a brief season the existence of Jehovah's prophet: persecuted at one place, he flees to another; but at the critical moment he invariably reappears, and, alone as he seems, casts shame and confusion on the enemies of his God. So may you see, surrounded by the roar and foam of angry waters, some tall lighthouse when all the sky and sea are black and stormy. Built upon a rock, the winds cannot move, nor the waves overthrow it: though sometimes hidden by the violence of the tempest from men's observation, the returning sunshine will show it still erect and firm, standing as ever the

guide of the traveller in darkness and light. About 822 years before Christ, Jeroboam (the son of Joash) conquered Damascus for Israel (2 Kings, xiv. 28.); but it could not have continued very long in their possession, for we read in less than a century afterwards that, on the application of Ahaz, Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, went up against Damascus and took it, and carried the people of it captive, and slew Rezin, the king of Syria (2 Kings, xvi. 9.), in accordance with the prophecies of Amos (i. 5.) and Isaiah (xvii. 1.). On the victory of the king of Assyria, Ahaz went up from Jerusalem to Damascus to meet him, and there saw an altar which pleased him so much that he sent plans of it to Urijah the priest in Jerusalem, who had one executed after these designs in Jerusalem by the time that Ahaz returned; and this altar (which was not made of brass, like the one already in the temple) thenceforth became the chief public one, Ahaz reserving the old brazen one for himself, having previously despoiled it of almost all its rich brazen ornaments for the benefit of the king of Assyria (2 Kings, xvi. 10—17.). The altar at Damascus was erected, we may conclude, in honour of one of the idols of the land, as Ahaz himself sacrificed to the gods of Damascus to conciliate them, and shut up the doors of the

temple of God (2 Chron. xxviii. 23, 24.) at Jerusalem: it is therefore probable that he substituted the copy of the altar he saw in Damascus of inferior value for the richer one in the temple, which he kept for his own idolatrous worship. The Damascenes were led captive to Kir, in Moab, and a colony of Assyrians was introduced at Damascus.

On the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, many of them settled at Damascus; for we find Saul (Acts, ix. 2.), as a zealous young Jew, taking letters from the high-priest at Jerusalem to the synagogues at Damascus, with powers to bind all Christian converts and bring them prisoners to the capital. And then follows the most wonderful scene in the history of this city, and the biography of all time, the sudden conviction and conversion of the fiercely-zealous Jew into the humble yet energetic Christian—Saul of Tarsus into Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ. At this period Damascus was, like the rest of Syria, governed as a Roman province, under a Roman governor, whom we find alluded to in Scripture under the name of Aretas. As no event of Scripture history is without its special locality in this land of traditions, the visitor to Damascus goes through the ceremony of being shown the place where

St. Paul was converted, and the part of the wall where he was let down in a basket. However credulity may console itself with the reflection that the old Roman road to Jerusalem might contain the site of the first event, an inquirer would probably be staggered to find, that of all the ancient wall but one little fragment remains, which is prudently made the scene of the second. The beauties of shade appear in all their highest perfections in the gardens of Damascus. There might be, perhaps, additional pleasures derivable from the sight of the more mossy glades, and various wild flowers of colder climates; but surely, in such countries as this, those venerable trees with their wide arms extending kind shelter to the heated passer-by—those rolling streams offering their grateful murmurs and their wished-for waters to thirsty man and beast—those scrambling thickets of red damask roses, whose blossoms perfume the air, all within a hundred paces of their doorway, are most fitted to excite the extravagant admiration of travellers, and almost to explain, if not to justify, the boasting language of their Oriental eulogists. Some of the timber, too, is old and grand, and would be magnificent in any country.

But there is more of the character of the East—the gay, gaudy, voluptuous, idle, yet irritable,

East—to be seen in the bazaars and streets of this strange city. We have nothing in England with which one can compare the effect of these places. Dark, almost to a fault, as a means of protection from the powerful rays of the sunlight, a long arched collection of passages or cloisters on either side of the open shop-fronts of the merchants, succeeding each other with scarce an interval, and a badly-paved path about two yards broad, and often less, extending down the centre,—these are the skeleton features of the bazaars of Damascus. But the sombreness of shade, and the dulness of dirt and overhanging cobwebs, is overcome by the gay wares and lively-coloured "dramatis personæ." Here is a long row of silken goods, a chief manufacture of Damascus, in bales of richest texture and brightest hue, arranged on shelves at the back of the little sort of open cabinet, on whose floor squats the seller, gravely smoking, calmly chatting, or studying with strange gestures the pages of the Koran. Over his head and around him, suspended on strings, and displayed by divers contrivances, are tempting shawls of Persia and Cashmere, costly scarfs with gold and silver patterns, and made-up embroidered clothes for men and women.

Another part of the bazaar will present you

with a colony of shoe-venders and shoe-makers, — not, as in Europe, a sable merchandize, but chiefly of gaudy scarlet and yellow, the prevailing colours of this garment at Damascus. 'Twould take me a long time, and would be tedious too, were I to attempt a detail of all the sorts of wares that the merchants of El-Shâm would tempt you with on their stalls, or in those little sacred nooks wherein all their best articles are deposited, those costly precious stones, turquoise, and topaz, and emerald, and diamond, and those endless contrivances for enabling a man the better to enjoy the rational satisfaction of converting his mouth into the crater of a little volcano, and to eject on patient suffering society a ceaseless volume of noxious vapours.

But the jostling, lounging crowd which throngs these marts of oriental commerce is, perhaps, the most amusing and interesting part of the scene which they have to show. While you are bargaining with a Greek merchant for some pretty silken vanity which caught your eye, and brought some absent friend to your heart, your dragoman cries, "Take care;" there is a momentary cry, and before you have entertained any precise idea as to the cause of alarm, you receive a blow which fells you to the earth, are seized upon by your dragoman, and the pitying by-

standers, and dragged into a nook of safety, whence you discover that the cause of your dismal overthrow and bruise was the first of a caravan of camels whose load had come into collision with your head, and whose feet, followed by those of twenty succeeding ones all in a string, might have trodden you in the mire of Damascus underfoot, and probably left you lifeless. This fate had well-nigh been mine; and if these long strings of heavily-laden camels are permitted silently to thread these narrow passages ('tis almost like passing the needle's eye), such will probably be the case with many. Sellers of sweetmeats, which were too soft and too sickly for my taste, infest, with odd wild cries and large brass trays, these public resorts; beverages of strange mysterious colours and unpronounceable names are vended to the curious thirsty in long glass tubes, and the less inquisitive are beset by retailers of water in great green long-necked bottles, temptingly stopped and bewreathed with snow. Such was the general impression made upon my mind by the scenes and sites of Damascus during my short stay in that beautifully placed and most completely oriental of cities.

CHAP. IV.

FROM DAMASCUS TO TIBERIAS.

WEDNESDAY, the 12th of April, was a fine morning, with a clear delicious air, such as the East seems only to afford in perfection; and we were marshalling our train of mules, and men, and horses, through the long "straight street" of Damascus.

Many a swart Arab glowered at us from under his striped head-covering, and seemed to measure the power of his gaily ornamented firelock or long quivering spear with the more sober but surer Europeans arms of our cavalcade. Adieu, then, to the minarets and motley crowds of El-Shâm, its shades, and its waters! We yearn to tread the soil hallowed by no inferior footstep than that of the Redeemer; we long for the land so loved by God incarnate, — oft dreamt-of Galilee! Our road lay all day along a level plain, grassy, and badly cultivated: a few rising rocky hills were covered by ruined khans, built by some kind hand to shelter travellers, and numberless camels were to be seen grazing about the

plain. Large flocks of black sheep and goats, too, intimated to us the fact that the tents of the Bedouin were in some adjacent though hidden nook; and an occasional dark half-naked figure, starting suddenly into view from behind the brushwood to gaze with scornful air upon the passing "cawadjees," confirmed this impression. After five hours' riding, and crossing several streams (wherein were many shells*), we halted and lunched by the side of a small river, under the shade of a few willows. A ruined building here is honoured in the maps with the name of Khan Sheikh, owing to its being immediately opposite to Djebel Sheikh. This mountain, which is (as I before observed) the Greater Hermon of Scripture, presented here a very noble appearance, rising from the plain, with its majestic peak, which was more acutely conical than most of the mountains of this country, and appears from hence the most lofty: it was covered with snow, which descended in long streaks down the sides of the mountain, as it lay in the depressions more sheltered from the rays of the sun.

In two hours more we arrived before the village of Sassa. We pitched our tents in an enclosure at some distance west of the place,

* Melania, Neritina, Unio, and Cyclas.

nearly encircled by a little stream. The town lies chiefly within a square, surrounded by walls about fourteen feet high, and flanked at each corner by a round tower, in height not much superior to the wall. The area of the town is not exactly square, being broader from east to west than from north to south. The only gate is towards the west, and the outer wall is supported by buttresses.* I walked with my friends into the town, which seemed a miserable filthy heap of ruins, having suffered terribly in a great fire, the evidences of which were to be seen on every side. There seemed to be nothing of more remote antiquity than the times of Saracenic rule: the ruined mosque, with its tower, alone made it picturesque. I have no doubt the tower was made available as "the tower of a watchman;" and I saw here a curious illustration of this practice of noting, from an eminence, the passage of travellers through the country. This was a young Arab, who sat so immoveably peering over the plain on the roof of a house which was situated on an eminence, that I took

* Nine on the north and south, and six on the east and west. There is a strong resemblance between the walls of the mosque with its tower to the enclosure and tower at Ramlah, the tower of the latter being much larger.

him for some time to be a great piece of dark stone.

Next morning, soon after starting, we came upon a pool of water, where four or five of the very graceful white herons which I frequently observed afterwards flew up. Saloom shot one of them. Some of the feathers of the tail were exquisitely light: I think I have seen them worn by ladies in Europe. Leaving this rocky and barren valley, where I observed some traces of an old road, probably the road from Damascus to Jerusalem, along which St. Paul was travelling at the time of his conversion, we passed next a rising ground, covered with bushes of white thorn, and enlivened by the flowers of a scarlet poppy, a blue geranium, and the showy little Vantol tulip. Many large hawks were hovering about this tract, and flocks of storks were to be seen busily hunting for their prey among the grass and brushwood. At the foot of a lofty hill we came near the village of Natron, six hours from Sassa; and here the great valley seemed to end, and a richly-wooded country commenced, like the less cultivated portions of an English park. Our muleteers here wished to stay for the night; but as we found they were bent upon making us do as they wished, and it was only two o'clock in the day,

we insisted upon their proceeding. I enjoyed the latter part of that ride very much, although I was much fatigued by the heat of the sun. We caught several distant views of the long looked-for sea of Galilee, lying far away embosomed in the mountains; and the delightful wood through which we were travelling, with its thick and rich pasturage of grass, formed a most welcome foreground to a heated traveller. Through the trees we caught occasional glimpses of the camels of those Bedouins who here employ themselves in burning the wood, with which this part abounds, into charcoal.* As the evening advanced, darkening and lengthening the grateful shadow of the trees, a less tired passer-by would have found great enjoyment in the loveliness of the scene; and I shall not easily forget that three hours' ride through the vales and rich pastures of Bashan, the ancient kingdom of Og. We rested on the margin of a pool, around whose banks was heard the mournful note of a hoopoe, while he skipped gaily along the ground in amusing contrast to his melancholy song. From some hidden glade came up the chatter of the little pied woodpecker; and the night overtook

* We met many of these wretched looking men carrying their charcoal in sacks on their camels to Damascus.

me while watching the aquatic gambols of the water-hens on the neighbouring pool.

A Fellah came with a flock of goats at night, and sold us milk: he was a fine muscular man, though rather under the common stature. He was wretchedly clad, slept on the open ground at night, and passed his time in tending his own sheep. These poor shepherd-owners illustrate our Lord's observations on the hirelings "whose own the sheep are not," as contrasted with the true shepherd, who is represented by such an owner and personal watcher of them. Our road lay next morning (Friday, 14th April) through the same rich and wooded character of country for four hours, the ground covered with beautiful annuals, presenting a sheet of flowers of the gayest colours, and dotted all over with the great black and white bodies of the storks, which were to be seen on every side. We descended at last into a valley which was bounded on the north by the waters of Merom, a small reservoir collected from the streams of Panias and Anti-Lebanon, on its southern outlet by the Lake of Tiberias. In the channel of the valley itself, connecting the waters of Merom with the lake, ran the current of the river Jordan, as yet a small though somewhat rapid stream. A few ruinous houses on the opposite side of the river were approached

by a small bridge, with three pointed arches, called "the Bridge of Jacob's Daughters," or more commonly among the Franks "Jacob's Bridge." We crossed this, and lunched in a little Turkish guard-house on the western side, the keeper whereof was with little difficulty prevailed upon to join our repast, and even to swallow a tumbler full of wine, bowing, however, to the scruples of his conscience so far as to turn his head, and shade the process of drinking with his hand from the gaze of the unbelieving Nazarenes. This old gentleman had his walls ornamented, as an intimation, I suppose, of his latent power, with a collection of such remarkably awkward and impracticable blunderbusses, horse pistols, and other fire-arms, as I have rarely noticed in any museum. Leaving the bridge of Jacob in the custody of this severe disciple of Mahomet, we ascended the hill on the western bank of the Jordan, descended into a valley to the south-west of it, and, entering the steep gorge of a mountain pass, we climbed gradually up what seemed to be the channel of a winter torrent. On rounding a hill, we suddenly discovered the ruined castle and city of Safet directly before us. A deep valley, thickly planted with olives, and figs, and vines, intervened between us and the cone of the hill upon which

Safet was placed. Crossing this, we soon found ourselves in the narrow streets of a ruined and dusty town; and seeking out the house of the English missionary to the Jews in the place (Mr. Cohen), he kindly showed us to a level green space, a little south-west of the town, where we pitched our tents, surrounded by the numerous idle and curious population with which these oriental places seemed to abound.

Safet is situated most romantically on the cone and crest of a lofty eminence, commanding an extensive view of the lake of Tiberias, with the regions beyond it, the country of Galilee, Tabor, Little Hermon, and even part of the plain of Esdraelon, with the mountains of Samaria. As is well known, the town itself was nearly ruined by a dreadful earthquake in 1837, the quarter of the Jews more particularly suffering by that calamity, and the precipitous nature of the ground whereon the houses were built aggravating the destruction by burying the lower tiers of dwellings in the ruins of those which had stood above them. In consequence of this, I understood that fewer Jews are now resident here than before that event; yet, if my informant at Safet did not vastly over-estimate the present Hebrew population, they have increased quite

recently, and are now nearly 3000 in number.* This is one of their four holy cities; the other three being Tiberias, Jerusalem, and Hebron. The sanctity of Safet consists in its having been the school and the grave of certain of their Jewish rabbis of the sixteenth century, and the place where many of their most celebrated cabalistic and rabbinical works were indited, particularly a work of high repute called the "Zohar." In consequence of all this, Safet, the seat of the fathers, ranks next in holiness to Jerusalem. The Jews here, however, are very poor, and so dependent upon the contributions of their foreign brethren, that missionary enterprises are much checked among them, nothing but hopeless poverty being held out as a temptation to embrace Christianity.

I was given to understand that the Jews of this place were about to present a petition to Queen Victoria†, stating the advantages which invariably accrued to the despised Israelites in the East wherever an English consul was located,

* I have always, however, observed the great disposition of the Jews to overrate their own numbers; and Dr. Young's estimate, of from 1500 to 2000, is more agreeable to my own ideas.

† This petition was most numerously signed by the rabbis and chief men.

and praying for such an officer at Safet. What a consul would have to do in such an out-of-the-way place, I cannot conceive; but such a step would certainly obtain many privileges and advantages for the Jews, which they do not enjoy either from the Moslems, who deem them (on religious grounds) no better than dogs, or from the Greek and Latin Christians, who, complacently appropriating to themselves all the promises of the God of Abraham, distribute, with no sparing hand, all His curses upon the dispersed children of the patriarchs. In the evening a Polish Jew, of handsome features, came to our tents and conversed for some time with Mr. M. and Mr. Cohen: he was a scribe, and distinguished for his beautiful orthography, but he seemed very poor, and his face bore the evident marks of want. His long black sidelocks hung down on each side of his face; they are the only part of the hair of the crown of the head which is allowed to grow, but the beard and moustache is in general use and esteem. Although our camp was in so lofty a position, the heat was somewhat oppressive, and under the shade of the trees the thermometer stood in the afternoon at 78° of Fahrenheit. There are several lions, in the form of tombs of prophets, and rabbis, in the vicinity of Safet, and not far off is a well wherein they tell

you Joseph was thrust by his brethren previously to his being sold to the travelling merchants: this well is said to be now full of scorpions. The olive groves which deck the slope and valley around Safet, are much frequented by the little brown owl, which is so common throughout the whole of Galilee and Samaria; one sat for a long time uttering its plaintive monotonous cry in a tree over our tents, very much to my annoyance.

Next morning we descended a most romantic pathway towards the sea of Tiberias. I had been all along much delighted and surprised at the beauty and variety of the flowers of the land of Israel, particularly in the Lebanon and the woodland scenes of Bashan; but the road this morning passed through fields of the richest and most gaily coloured annuals, bulbous plants, and shrubs, which covered the ground and rose luxuriantly, often higher than my stirrups. The masses of brilliant colour, the yellow of marigolds, the scarlet of poppies and of a magnificent adonis, the rose-pink of the linum, a straw-coloured scabious, yellow and white peas, graceful vetches of every shade of pink and lilac, and now and then tall clumps of wild pink holy-oak, shooting up above the surface of that magnificent natural carpet, all this lavish outpouring of beauty seemed to me to usher in, by a path be-

strewn with flowers, the entrance to those scenes so loved and trodden and hallowed by the Saviour.* Descending by degrees, we reached at last in about three hours the north-western corner of the lake of Tiberias. Yes: the calm blue waters of this very sea had often borne their Maker and their God, and the silence of these rocks and glens had often been broken by his holy voice!

We crossed the dry bed of a stream overshadowed with tall reeds and the rosy-flowering oleander†, now in full blossom, passed through a few patches of ripening corn, rousing the storks as we went along, and shortly arrived at a few broken tanks and heaps of rubbish, which seemed to indicate an ancient and buried village. Our guides knew no name for it, but I found afterwards that it is considered to be the site of old Capernaum. But if our Lord's expression, "Thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down," &c. (Matt. xi. 23.), is to be taken for any thing more than a rebuke of the pride of its inhabitants, I should have looked for Capernaum rather on the summit or ridge of one

* A graceful dark clearwing flew about these fields of flowers, but I was unable to capture one to examine it: it was not a British species.

† Called "Deffle" by the Arabs.

of the adjacent hills. However that may be, it is a striking though oft-reported fact, that of Capernaum, Chorazin, and Bethsaida, no memory or known vestige remains. I asked repeatedly for the names of all the places and sites around the north and west ends of the lake, and found nothing at all approaching to the sound of those three towns. And is not this worthy to be noted alike by infidel, by Jew, and Christian? Where once was life, and wealth, and pride — Capernaum, Chorazin, and Bethsaida, the solemn warning voice of Him, who, to human eye, though but a lowly Nazarene, was yet the Son of God, the same voice that stilled the waves which lashed their shores, pronounced the doom of those ungrateful cities! And now the traveller must look and ponder over stones and mouldering heaps, must catch at atoms in the dust of time, to grasp a notion of their whereabout, Capernaum, Chorazin, and Bethsaida. There were a multitude of meanings in that which Jesus spake, "Heaven and earth may pass away, but my words shall not pass away." Cry, then, ye desolated shores of blue Genesareth, to every man who sees and hears your solitude, Gentile, and Jew, and Christian! for some there are, perchance, who stop their ears lest the sweet wisdom of the gospel charm them, and yet may

pause at preaching such as yours, whose very dust proclaims the wrath of God on those who dare to do despite unto the Spirit of his grace. Four hours from Safet we came upon a wretched village, now called Medja, probably the ancient Magdala*, which, although situated on the margin of a lake which still, as in the days of the Redeemer's earthly sojourn, abounds in fish, does not possess a single boat. Some poor women were here watching a few patches of the tobacco plant, and the land, although badly cultivated and swampy, appeared very fertile. We pursued a road leading close by the western shore of the lake, sometimes ascending, as the rocks intruded too closely to the water to allow us to pass round them. We alighted and took refreshment in the shade of a clump of bushes (chiefly of the Nubk), with our feet almost touching the water of that hallowed sea. What a solemn reality the scene threw over the life and miracles of our beloved Saviour, how every common circumstance, the little sporting fish, the gathering clouds, seemed to me to have a strange unusual interest! Wandering along that pebbly shore, and picking up the little shells† which lay among

* Robinson, vol. i. p. 278.

† I found here two species of *Melanopsis*, one *Melania*, one *Neritina*, and one *Cyrena*.

the stones, I looked with some curiosity to the north-eastern side of the lake, nearly opposite to me, for the "steep place" over the sea which should mark the country of the Gadarenes, and sure enough there are several declivities which would very well answer the description of the gospel. These coasts then opposite to where I stood, so tame and smooth in outline, were once inhabited by men who prayed their God and ours "to depart out of their coasts." How I longed to pass over and look for the tombs cut no doubt in the rocks like some we had passed about half an hour before on this side of the water, the tombs where was that poor possessed-one whom our Lord met coming out of them, "exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way," and whom he healed! As I slowly rode along the shore, how my heart swelled with pleasure that I was thus allowed to gaze on this sacred scene. Placid Genesareth, the sea of Galilee, so long for years the object of my thoughts and dreams. Alas! how is it that the heart seems oftentimes too slow, too sluggish for the intellect? We cannot trace this mystery, we see that all combines at times to elevate the soul to contemplation, yet often, like some stock or stone, it cannot, will not rise. I felt this often in this Holy Land, but never less than by the margin of

this lake, the sight of which brought to my heart a sweet tranquillity, like that which rested on its own broad bosom. Hark! a shot from Yussuf: 'tis a grey pigeon from the rock that falls, and the echo of his gunfire has set on wing the screaming white sea bird*, and caused the grebe to stop his gambols in the water, and dive beneath the surface. In a valley, and on a point of land which projects into the sea which bears its name, is Tabariah, the Tiberias of scripture. A wall surrounded it on the land side, flanked by a few round towers; but the earthquake, which nearly destroyed Safet, shook terribly the bulwarks of Tiberias, and ruined breaches and cracked walls present themselves on every side. It is a miserable place; a collection of crumbling, tumbling hovels, with the remains of a fallen mosque or two. The few lanes in it are narrow and frequently overarched with a rude awning of sticks, pieces of old cloth and mats, which a man on horseback must bend to avoid. There were many of the inhabitants standing about, and their chief peculiarity seemed to be an extreme paucity of clothing, some carrying this so

* The smaller tern, or sea-swallow, which I was somewhat surprised to see here in a fresh-water lake. I saw also some crabs, exactly resembling those of the Mediterranean coast, several grebes and a water-hen, and a flight of quails.

far as to dispense with all covering whatsoever except a cloth about their loins. Here I began to notice the singular beauty of the limbs of many of those people, their hands and feet especially; indeed, their dark, sunburnt, wiry bodies, reminded me of the fine bronzes I was so pleased with in the galleries of Rome and Naples, save that the living statues of Galilee alone possessed a keen and splendid eye, lustrous and black as night. There are many Jews in Tiberias; but I was too tired to pass sufficient time here to gain information about them: they have, however, schools and synagogues as befits the dwellers in a holy city. Mr. M. visited them, but did not entertain very favourable notions about their condition. We had been warned against the fleas of Tiberia, which are notorious for their size, activity, and number; so we encamped rather more than a mile to the south of the city, on the banks of the lake, and close against the new baths built by Ibrahim Pacha, over the hot springs which represent the baths or station of Emmaus, whereof Josephus speaks. Some English travellers, whom I afterwards met in Jerusalem, experienced much annoyance from the number of snakes in this locality, but I did not observe any. We were long in great fear, after our arrival, that our mules

with the baggage had been lost or stopped, but on sending, first Saloom, and then the fiery Yussuf, to investigate the cause of their non-arrival, it turned out that the muleteers were smoking and amusing themselves at Tiberias, and had embraced, as an open question, and were very amicably discussing the theory, that we might take care of ourselves. It was intensely hot and shade was scarce, there being only one respectable tree within a mile of the baths, so after I had made as good a sketch of the north-east end of the lake as the heat and my ability would allow, I joined my friends in sitting among a crowd of peasantry under the shadow of the wall of a domed edifice which covered the spring, considered in these parts a wonderful structure. The water flows into a large circular reservoir, which is enclosed in a chamber under the dome. Light is admitted sparingly through masses of thick fused glass stuck at intervals in this dome; a plan which produces a very good effect in this sunny land. The water is so hot on first issuing into this basin, that it is said an egg may be boiled in the mouth of the stream. Mr. M., who bathed in it, described it as overpowering, and was terribly debilitated by its effects. I did not detect any salt in the taste of it. When we arrived, the favourite wife of the Pacha of Acre was in-

dulging in a bath, having come from Acre two days before for the purpose of trying its efficacy. This favourite wife of the Pacha of Acre and her ladies made a most extraordinary noise, screaming and laughing all the time of their lustrations. We were objects of considerable wonder to the rustic group who were gathered outside awaiting her highness's departure to take their bath, and one old lady, whose appearance impressed me with the distressing conviction that it was the first bath she had had for many years, cross-questioned Mr. S. in a very amusing way. Having discovered he was an "Inglese," she and all the other women threw up their arms, and said "Mashallah;" further inquiry eliciting the fact that he was not a Moslem, but a believer in "Mary Yussuf*;" there was another elevation of arms, and another exclamation, "God is merciful," and the religious enthusiasm of this piece of Moslem antiquity having got so far as to inquire why the Cawadjee was not a faithful believer in the prophet, she did not wait for a reply, but retreated into the wondering circle, and satisfied the calls of her conscience by fervently, though decidedly, cursing the great-grandfathers' beards of our whole party. At last the tardy

* I several times heard this name applied to Christians.

muleteers arrived, and the tents were pitched, and while some of our party walked to Tiberias, I strolled about the margin of the lake, or sat in the tent door.

The sky was suddenly overcast, and a gust of wind came down so quickly and unexpectedly upon the tent that the pegs were loosened, and had I not caused them to be immediately secured, the whole affair would have been swept into the lake. The water, just now so calm, rose with the gale into white curling waves, and had a boat been sailing on the lake at that moment, it would have needed the greatest skill and care to have avoided an upset.* But there is now not a single boat upon the lake, that one of which recent travellers report having been purchased by the American expedition for exploring the Dead Sea and the Jordan. It was thought that this old craft might prove useful in descending the rapids of the stream, but this did not turn out to be the case, and the old boat was left to its fate on the banks of the sacred river, not far from the outflow of Gennesareth.

While we were at dinner in the tent, a fisher-

* Lieutenant Lynch and the gentlemen of the Dead Sea expedition told me, that in that singular sea the waves became very suddenly and violently agitated, so as often to endanger the safety of the boat.

man passed us with his basket of fish: they were small and few in number; "he had been," he said, "toiling all the day, and caught nothing." This poor Arab seemed venerable to me, despite his rags and abject appearance, for was he not a fisherman in the sea of Galilee, the same as Peter, and James, and Andrew, and John? though, indeed, they had boats and nets to fish with, while this half-naked Arab had but a hook to cast into the sea. As he passed on towards Tiberias, I could not but gaze on his retreating figure till distance hid it, so many scenes that made this shore immortal came crowding thickly on my mind. The toiling sons of Zebedee, and then their teeming nets and sinking boats, the listening multitudes, the crowded shore, and Jesus teaching them out of the ship a little way from the land, the sudden storm which tossed the boat and made the frighted fishermen awake their Lord to calm the very wind and waves at his Almighty word. What associations were these! all called forth with hitherto unknown reality by the sight of a fisherman of Galilee. And when night came on, and the bright moon threw its cold solemn light upon the waters, and made the mountains on the further side look grand and undefined, how unrivalled was that scene, with all its train of circumstances, with

all its history! In the daylight, though not equal to the Swiss, or even to the better of our English lakes, on account of the very level outline of the eastern mountains, and the want of trees to break the monotony of colour, which gives a kind of sadness to the prospect, though the blue waters are unchequered by a single sail: yet even thus there is a beauty in Gennesareth. From the hill side, behind the baths, the view was one which charmed the more I gazed; the colour so heavenly blue, with the crumbling walls and towers of Tiberias almost upon its bosom; and northward, on a lofty mountain-ridge, Safet is visible, "a city set upon a hill;" more eastwardly the yielding hills, hint of the entrance of the Jordan; and over this, far distant, yet still first in mountain dignity, rises the snowy head of greater Hermon. But moonlight, to my mind, was most congenial to this sacred amphitheatre of hills and spreading vale of waters. I could not go to rest; and so I wandered forth, leaving our tents beside the lake, strange objects by the moon's uncertain rays. Up by this lofty overhanging mountain, a caverned rock my cloister, what solemn, strange delight it was to sit, and muse, and think of Jesus! How stilled was every thing; some distant jackal's mournful howl

alone disturbed the silence, so imagination had no curb in sound to check her freedom, and figured to herself a labouring boat tossed by the waves of a contrary wind in the midst of the sea at my feet. It was the fourth watch of the night, in years gone by, and, lo! there walked upon the obedient water the incarnate Son of God; a deadly fear came over those poor fishermen within the ship, but their cry of horror was changed into one of adoring wonder when they hear their Master's voice, "Be of good cheer; it is I, be not afraid" (Matt. xiv. 24. 27.). And then to dwell upon the thought, that in some mountain by this lake so loved by Him, perhaps upon the very hill I touched, "Jesus had gone apart to pray, and when the evening came, was there alone" (Matt. xiv. 23.), alone in blessed communion with his Father. I cannot tell what then I felt, in that lone hallowed spot, by that most hallowed shore. I do not even know how long I stayed, spell-bound by thoughts unknown to me ever before or since. Yes, sanctified Gennesareth, as long as memory reigns, and reason lasts; till death shall sever from us things of time, and heavenly joys leave no room for the soul to dwell on those of earth, thou art the fairest treasure of my recollection, the brightest jewel gathered in my pilgrimage!

CHAP. V.

TIBERIAS TO JERUSALEM.

EARLY the next morning, April 16th, we passed along the shore, over the scattered and heaped ruins of ancient Tiberias, now remembered only by a few light granite columns; and approaching again near to the walls of the present city, we took the course of a large wady which descended from the north-west, ascended the hills, and, after passing a spot where Yussuf assured us that the miracle of the loaves and fishes was performed ("even the Turks," said he, "are obliged to admit it"), we found ourselves, in three hours, near the village of Loubyeh, which, though somewhat on an eminence, looked down in part upon the memorable plain where was fought the dreadful battle of Hâttin, or Tiberias, so fatal to the Templars, and the cause of the Crusades, and so glorious for Saladin and the defenders of Islam. Hereabouts, too (Yussuf pointed out the exact spot), the site of the Assumption of the Virgin is placed, the account of which legendary transaction is a very bitter

jest upon the history it would substantiate; in truth, a series of assumptions. Over a plain*, then through some brushwood, and hard by, in a little valley, lies Kaphar Kanna, which some think Cana of Galilee; and although Dr. Robinson suggests "Kama-el-Jalil" as the true one, the position of this, so close to Nazareth, gives it, to my mind, a greater probability. There were only a few low houses, but the little grove of olives, figs, and locust-trees diffused a pleasant shade, and the village well (where, if this be the true Cana of Galilee, the water was most likely drawn which turned to wine at the bidding of its God,) was crowded with sheep, and goats, and a few oxen, waiting by a broken stone trough (which bore marks of Roman workmanship) for the elevation of a leathern water-bucket, which a nearly-naked shepherd lad was drawing up, full of the precious liquid.

We stopped a few minutes at this well, where were gathered several women and girls with their rude earthen waterpots, paid the little shepherd for a draught from his bucket (how sweet I thought it), then filled our zemzemyahs, or water-bottles, "salaam'd" the dark-eyed and

* To the left of which Mount Tabor reared its conical head, apparently at no great distance.

finely-formed women, and rode off. The road led over several rocky hills, and while rounding one of these an unfortunate mule missed its footing and rolled over several times with the tent equipage on its back down into the valley. I thought it was killed, but at the bottom, its load being loose, it managed to get rid of it altogether, and commenced quietly to graze on some green corn. The Moukharis (as the muleteers are termed in these parts) soon captured the fallen one, and having administered a good many kicks and cuffs to teach him never in future to indulge in falling down fifty feet of precipice, they reloaded him and reconducted him, with much profane swearing, to the pathway. In seven hours from Tiberias we entered the valley of Nazareth, which struck me from this side as very beautiful—Lord Lindsay to the contrary notwithstanding.* There are, of course, many barren rocks and much uncultivated ground, but there are also gardens stretching all up the hill "whereon the city is built;" and these, with their hedges of prickly pear, their olives, pomegranates, figs, and carobs, gave a peaceful and fertile air to the vale of Nazareth. The minaret and dome of a solitary mosque, and the prison-

* Letters, vol. ii. p. 82.

like walls of the Latin convent, were the only distinguishable buildings; the rest all square, monotonous, and stony. About two miles from the town, towards the south-east, the sudden termination of a mountain ridge suggested probably the name of the Mount of Precipitation, whose distance from Nazareth would, in a country where the Bible was read, have been fatal to the tradition that here the infuriated Nazarenes led out our Lord to cast him down. But though we read in Scripture that they led him "to the brow of the hill whereon their city was built," the Christians of Nazareth have made the scene of this event at so great a distance on the authority of tradition. There are several precipices at the back of Nazareth which might serve for the site of this transaction.

Our tents were pitched on a pleasant plot of grass, shaded by a few olive-trees, and hedged off on two sides by tall fences of prickly pear *; and we were entertained by the interesting spectacle of the women and children of Nazareth coming along the road in front of us to fill their stone pitchers with water at a fountain called "the well of the Virgin." The name is appro-

* The prickly pear of Palestine has a yellow flower, that of Madeira a reddish orange.

priate and just, as it is the chief, if not the only, public well of the place; and in all likelihood the mother of our Lord often drew water at it; and our blessed Master himself, during his mysterious boyhood, oft quenched his thirst at its cooling spring. As I felt this, an additional charm was given to a scene lovely in itself; for truly those graceful women of Nazareth, with their gay and tasteful dress, the hanging sleeve, rich jacket, folding trowsers, and long head-dress descending with their hair down their back, when added to the stately even gait needful to keep the pitcher upright on the head, composed the most lovely groups I had seen in Palestine. The exquisite symmetry and beauty of the up-raised arm of many of these dark-eyed damsels (the fingers just steadying the balanced water-jar with a touch), and of the little firm-set foot, often without a slipper, were not confined to one or two, but seemed extended to them all; and in these features they were fit models for a sculptor.

We visited the wonders of the place. We began with one or two grottoes of the Virgin, the first having a column which they tell you was once joined, but separated by an earthquake, (and if each end were not of a different kind of

marble*, one might believe it in this unsettled country,) and the second being the place where we were assured (upon the same indisputable authority) that the Virgin hid herself from the persecutions of the "Turks and Jews." † I have heard much said of the chapel over these puerilities, but it seemed to me to be just as full of gaudy trumpery and second-rate paintings as all these eastern Roman Catholic places of worship are, no more and no less. A miserable-looking man, with his head shaved nearly bare, and closely resembling in his coarse dress and appearance a recently-escaped lunatic, was going through a sort of nasal chant, in which he was joined by some dozens children and red-capped Christian Arabs at stated intervals. They call this the site of the Annunciation, of which subject a tolerable picture hangs over the chief altar. Then we were shown Joseph's workshop; and a great round stone was introduced to us as the table on which our Lord eat the passover with his disciples. Against the wall of the apartment holding it is hung a board with this inscription (in Latin): — "It is a continued and uninterrupted tradition among all the Oriental nations,

* One is of red and pink granite; the other cippolino.

† "Turci et Ebræi."

that this stone, called the Table of Christ, is the very one (illam ipsam) upon which our Lord Jesus Christ did eat with his disciples both before and after his resurrection from the dead. And the holy Roman Church hath granted an indulgence of seven years, &c. to all the faithful visiting this sacred place, in reciting at length there one 'Pater' and 'Ave Maria' whilst they are in a state of grace." The population of Nazareth is chiefly Christian; there are no Jews. The Latin convent here is well known to strangers, and often acts as an hotel — in this country a great convenience. There is a very fine view from the hill to the north-west of the town, commanding the plain of Esdraelon, and of Megiddo, to Carmel and the Mediterranean; but the mountains to the east and north prevent a more extended view in these points, and hide the sea of Galilee, and all but the summit of Tabor, completely. Nazareth is full of solemn associations; and themes for meditation can never be lacking in a place where the Redeemer spent his childhood, his boyhood, and his youth, —nearly thirty years of his course upon earth. I looked upon the outline of those mountains, and felt at least that these were all familiar to the sight of the "holy child Jesus," and had borne the imprint of his youthful foot. I looked

towards the fountain, and assured myself that He, the well-spring of eternal life, the fount of all blessing, had often stopped to taste its waters, and perchance had borne, obedient to his earthly parents' will, many a pitcher to fill at its limpid stream.

Leaving Nazareth the next day, we passed several fine locust, olive, and fig trees, and taking apparently the valley of a now dry watercourse, we rode down it, till at last, after about two hours, we emerged from this defile into the vast level plain of Esdraelon. The view of this plain was remarkably fine, with Tabor on our left hand, Carmel on our right, and the mountains of Gilboa and the more distant ridges of Samaria before us. From the flat surface of the ground rose at intervals small round hills of no considerable height, and these were frequently crowned by the ruins of villages and towns, if not by a living colony of "fellaheen," or agricultural Arabs: some of these wretched and oppressed men we saw engaged in ploughing the soil with a mean implement made entirely of wood without any metal, drawn by two oxen, or occasionally an ox and an ass together.* About

* The inequality of the animals, often a great and a little ox together, causing them great discomfort, no doubt illus-

three hours' riding over this plain, under a painfully burning sun, which was unrelieved by any breeze, brought us to a village which is considered by Robinson to be ancient Jezreel, placed on a light eminence, and consisting of some twenty ruined Arab cottages and a dilapidated tower. Until this we had been passing in sight of the little Hermon, and the sites of Endor and Main were pointed out to me on this ridge. At Jezreel, which now bears the name of Zerin, we stopped a few moments by the mouth of a well, where a black, apparently a Nubian, was watering the flocks which he tended. Another shepherd came up while we were there, and asked a girl who had just drawn a pitcherful of water for leave to drink, which she accorded with grace and calm nonchalance, as though it were a common act with her. Several girls stood around the well's mouth with their pitchers; and I noticed again the extreme beauty of their form, and the delicate symmetry of their hands, arms, and feet, unconstrained as they were by the mischievous notions of European fashions, or the wretched incarceration of stays and tight shoes. Dark indeed they were, these daughters

trates the Apostle Paul's injunction, "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." (2 Cor. vi. 14.)

of Jezreel, their head-dress and their dowry a string of coins bound across their sunburnt forehead, their clothing poor and scanty; but with all this, their black and flashing eyes, their noble features, their free and graceful unconstrained step, compelled me to admit that at least they more resembled her whom God created first of women than all that European care and fashion could produce.

No tapering pinched wax-like waist was here, no cramped or Cinderella-slippered foot, but the woman stands the noble splendid creature which the Almighty formed her, and her free foot-fall and unfettered form tell us something of that which no European saloon can do—how heaven-formed Eve looked in Paradise. Yet how sad and mournful was the thought, that the immortal souls who tenanted these fair tabernacles were grovelling in the lowest ignorance and sin; all knowing nothing of their guilty state, or how a Saviour is waiting to be gracious to them; for, alas! they were all Mohammedans, and from that terrible religion (where woman sinks into a soul-less animal) there seems as yet no ordinary door of exit found, where Christ may be obtained.* In another hour we reached

* It is a dreadful yet wonderful fact, that the word of

Jenin, the En-gannin of Scripture, which is at the south-eastern end of the plain of Esdraelon, and is surrounded by thick and well-cultivated gardens, full of beautiful trees, having streams flowing through them. Five very fine palm trees distinguish this town, two of them the largest I have seen in the East; they are like all the others, the date palm (*Phœnix dactylifera*), although they do not bear fruit well south of Egypt. We pitched our tents near this place, with a fine view of the town, backed by the mountains of Gilboa, whose name recalls the death of Saul and Jonathan, so beautifully mourned over by the royal poet of Israel.

The plain over which we had passed was also highly interesting, it is commonly named in Scripture "the valley of Jezreel," (Josh. xvii. 16.; Judg. vi. 33.; Hos. i. 5.) and has been the scene of many a great battle; part of it towards Carmel is termed the plain of Megiddo, from an ancient city of that name. Here flows that ancient river, the river Kishon; here Barak discomfited Sisera (Judg. iv. and v.); here Joram, and Jezebel, and Ahaziah fell by

God and the preaching of truth make no impression on the Moslem; and Dr. Wolff (I think) states, in his mission to Bokhara, that there is no well-authenticated case of a Mohammedan converted to Christianity.

the command of Jehu, in retribution for the murder of Naboth the Jezreelite (2 Kings, ix.); here Napoleon fought (at the Nazareth end of the plain) the battle of Mount Tabor, against the vast army of the Mamelukes, and the force of the Ottoman empire, in 1799; and here, according to many students of prophecy, will be the great battle which is to array, in the last days, the whole powers of darkness against the people of the Lord.* The inhabitants of Jenin are nearly all Moslems, and two of my friends who walked into the city were pelted with stones, and hooted at by the children as "Hanzeer," "Pigs," and Frangees; indeed, on a second visit to this place, I was obliged to make a show of using my fire-arms, to free myself from molestation while sketching the group of palms. There is one fine minaret, and a dome belonging to the chief mosque, which imparts considerable beauty to the view of the city from the south-west. The country around this place seems to be very fertile and more cultivated than is usual in Palestine; a small white vetch is much grown for man and

* I conclude that the authority for this locality for the mysterious event mentioned in Revelations, xvi. 14., as "the battle of that great day of God Almighty," is the word "Armageddon," which is commonly expounded as meaning the hill of Megiddo.

beast; it is supposed, on good grounds, to be the lentile of Scripture, of which a pottage, such as Jacob sold to Esau for his birthright, is still made. In the limestone rocks near this place I started several quails and pigeons, and a vast number of storks; immense flocks of the latter indeed were wheeling about over our heads all the time we were crossing the Plain of Esdraelon. Snakes were common: I nearly trod upon one of considerable length (apparently about eight feet), but his movements were too swift to enable me to examine him, so as to determine the species. A new "flora" began to appear in the mountains, which extended almost to the hill country of Judæa; insects were very numerous, particularly of the orders *Coleoptera*, *Lepidoptera*, and *Orthoptera;* large specimens of our English swallow-tail butterfly (*P. Machaon*) were very common; and there were myriads of *Hipparchia*, *Lycæna*, and *Pontia*.* A good deal of wheat, and many patches of melons and gourds, are grown about Jenin; and I was disagreeably reminded of the dogs of Jezreel by their barking, which continued all night, and was answered by those of Jenin, and by the jackals of the mountains of Samaria. We passed up a rocky valley on the 18th, and

* Here I found, also, a small though beautiful *Pupa*.

almost before day-break came to Kabatyeh, romantically placed at the end of the defile. Shortly after we entered a narrow valley called the Vale of Sanoox, from a ruined town of that name perched on the top of one of those round natural elevations so common in this country; and we rested awhile under the shadow of the olive groves near to Gebal, where Yussuf shot a little pied woodpecker. Over hill and valley, stone and rock, and brushwood, in eight hours from Jenin we entered the Vale of Nablous, the ancient Shechem or Sychar. The rich verdure of the orchards and gardens, the lofty mountains on either side, the stream in the mid-valley, and the town with its towers grouped picturesquely among the trees on the slope of the southern hills, or range of Gerizim, formed a beautiful scene, and reminded me very much of the situation of Matlock in Derbyshire.

When our tents were pitched in the valley below the town, by a ravine stream, I rode out with two of my friends through the chief street and bazaars. They were so old and dirty, and primitive in appearance, often arched over, and going under great Saracenic buildings, that I fancied Nablous, or the New City, gave me a very complete impression of an old Syrian town, as it must have looked a thousand years

ago. The gay colours of Eastern dress gave liveliness to a scene which, without, would have looked desolate and gloomy, yet the only features of a decided style of architecture which I noticed, were of the days of the Saracens or the crusaders. A fine ruined church exhibited an Eastern doorway, richly decorated with Byzantine details; a picturesque medley of pointed arches, set off by Norman ornaments and classic pilasters; and an open court, ornamented with some very good pointed arcades; but this now serves as a mosque. There is likewise to the south-west of the city another ruined building, where a niche of Moorish character, and a dilapidated tower, were made quite lovely by surrounding groves of orange and pomegranate, which cast their flowering shade and scent over those fragments of the past. While riding through the streets the little Moslem boys got up a song against us, the burden of which I tried in vain to discover; but as they illustrated this ditty by pelting us and our horses' legs with stones as big as they could lift and cast, we thought it better to leave the streets of Nablous at the first opportunity which presented itself. I revisited this place afterwards on my return from Jerusalem, with Jacob's Well and Mount Gerizim, but it will perhaps be better

to make all my observations on those sites at once.

We visited both the small synagogue of Jews, and their rabbi, who was very poor, and we went to the door of the synagogue of the Samaritans, and sent to the rabbi for admittance; but this dignitary thought it needful for his grandeur to keep us so long in waiting that (although I had taken off my shoes preparatory to entering) we refused to be detained any longer. So I missed seeing the celebrated Samaritan Pentateuch, so much spoken of by travellers (though Mr. M. had already seen it), but as I could not have understood a single word, the loss was not after all very great. Several old Samaritan inscriptions were built into the wall of this synagogue: the characters are palpably different from the Hebrew. These Samaritans are generally considered descendants of those who inhabited Sychar in the days of our Saviour, and the race is said (Josephus, *Antiq.* ix. 14. 3., Horne's *Introduction*, iii. 384.) to have had its origin in the intermixture of the Babylonian nations, sent by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, to people the desolated land of Samaria, with the remnant of the ten tribes which were not led into captivity. They are now, as I understand, few in number,

and dress differently from the Jews, with whom they are still in deadly hatred.

About half-an-hour's ride down the vale, just where the two opposite ridges of mountain rise into the peaks of Gerizim and Ebal, and then rather suddenly break off, the valley widens a little, and has a Moslem tomb or two, and in the very middle of this plot, which all unite in considering as the parcel of ground which Jacob gave to his son Joseph (John iv. Clark's *Travels*, iv., p. 278, &c.), is a heap of rubbish, the remains of a church, with a few columns of granite, lying on the surface. Among the stones of this heap, a small depression in the ground surrounds a triangular hole about two feet in diameter, and this is "Beer Yacob," or Jacob's Well, and is known by that name among the Arab population of the country. More adventurous travellers than I was have descended into this well, and found it to consist of two chambers, the lower one containing water at a great depth. As we had nothing with us whereby to draw water from so deep a reservoir, we had to content ourselves with the information from our guide that the well always contained a supply, but that it was now rarely used. It is quite out of the ordinary track from Nablous to Jerusalem, though its situation is proper for a traveller from Galilee to

Judea who rested at the entrance of the defile, with Gerizim towering on the one side and Ebal on the other, while his disciples went up to the city to buy food. It struck me, however, that the ancient Sychar might have stood in our Lord's day somewhat nearer to the well than it does at present, for I cannot fancy that when the summit of Gerizim, with its temple, was the great attraction to the Samaritans, they could be content to have their city nearly an hour's distance from it. And the very name of Nablous, or Neapolis ("New City"), hints perhaps of an older site and locality, while the uneven ground and broken fragments at the northern foot and declivity of Gerizim (Gebel el Tûr) leave as much trace of such a place as might be expected, when the "New City" was in all likelihood built of the materials of the old. Such a site for Sychar would make it the more probable for a woman to fetch water thither from the "Beer Yacob." Yet if Nablous holds the same position as Sychar did, there is no difficulty in supposing that the Samaritan woman might come thence to draw at this well, on account of the superior coolness or quality of the water, or in a time when other sources failed, the great depth of Jacob's well making it then probably an object of

resort. I visited this well three times, but it is in appearance an insignificant object, with no part of that wall or resting-place remaining where the wearied Son of Man did "sit thus by the well" while he announced those sublime and spiritual doctrines concerning the nature and worship of God, which are the ground-work of Christianity and the overthrow of all sacerdotal, secular, and carnal systems of religion, "the living water" of eternal truth. It has often struck me, from the quick recognition of our Lord's nation by this woman of Samaria, that he most probably wore the dress of a Jewish rabbi, but this may perhaps be thought a fanciful way of explaining that curious fact. Mount Gerizim is ascended from a slight depression towards the north-west; the road up is rough, very steep, and encumbered with loose stones. At the summit is a large collection of ruined walls, the evidences of a massive building, with bevelled stones resembling those in supposed Jewish edifices, and a rude circular arch. Opinions on the date of such remains can only be conjectural, but they looked to me very much as if the last structure here had been erected by the early Saracens, with a view, perhaps, to defence, out of the materials of the Samaritan's temple, which

was first sacred to Jehovah *, and afterwards to Jupiter Hellenicus, if the inimical testimony of a Jew is to be taken. † A small wely, or Turkish sepulchre, with a whitened dome, which is reared at the corner of these ruins (which are very extensive), may be seen at a great distance, particularly in the country to the south and east. From the summit, the view, though grand, is limited by the hill country of Judea and the mountains of Ephraim: I looked for columns or ornaments of architecture without success. The eastern, and even the western slope of Gerizim was cultivated, and bore numerous patches of corn, and in a little dell on the north-west, just where the mountain rises from the valley, there was luxuriant vegetation and a beautiful grove of olives.

It rained hard on the morning of Wednesday the 19th of April, when we defiled through the pass between Gerizim and Ebal. During the night, we had a visit at our encampment from

* I cannot but agree with the Samaritans and Lord Nugent, that there is a strong scriptural presumption in favour of Gerizim as the scene of Abraham's prepared sacrifice of Isaac rather than Moriah. Jerusalem, "the place of Sichem," and "the plain of Moreh" (Gen. xii. 6.), are evidently connected. See note on Hebron.

† Josephus' Antiquities, xii. 5. 5.

certain Arabs, who wished to appropriate some of our horses. They succeeded in getting one loose from the ropes by which he was tethered, but at this crisis some of our men awoke and a skirmish ensued, which ended in the discomfiture of the enemy and the recapture of the animal.

The rainy morning drove the storks to the expedient of settling on the olives, and the effect of their great bodies and long legs on these little little trees was strangely ludicrous, and reminded me forcibly of an early Dutch painting, or Hogarth's caricature on perspective.

We went past the foot of Harvarra, a village on the hill side, and entered a rocky valley with ancient terraces cut and piled up in the declivities, which indicated a high state of cultivation formerly. The wild flowers seemed to hint of latent goodness in the soil, and the air, after the rain, was heavy with the scent of the little yellow jasmine and the common honey-suckle, which fell down the steeps of the rock. * Thousands of snails, tempted by the wet, were crawling over the stones. † We met several

* A blue scabious, small white comfry, lilac salvia, and briza major, were conspicuous plants in this valley.

† A large striated helix, and a bulimus of nearly an inch in length, were the most common: the latter I saw no fur-

parties of natives and wandering Arabs: they were all armed with guns, and frequently with side-arms likewise; and I saw only one fellah in this neighbourhood at work with the plough, and he was armed too. Indeed, this part of Palestine is notorious for the number of bad characters and predatory wanderers which infest it, and a party of English who had passed along the road a little before us, was attacked, and had to fight for it not far from Nablous. We stayed for the night at the little village of Mai Haroba, and, on account of the wet, located ourselves in an empty and dry house in the middle of the place. We were soon surrounded by a number of inquisitive people, who would seat themselves and calmly smoke round the interior of the very room we had taken. It was in vain that we hinted and informed these worthies that after the wet we wished to make our toilet; this only seemed to increase their desire to stay, and at last, wearied by the ill success of all mild endeavours, my friends and I rose "*en masse*" and pushed them one after another quietly, yet decisively, through the doorway. But as we had no window in the room, and our light was all derivable from this door-

ther north than Nablous, and it extended southward as far as Hebron.

way, we had to station a stout Arab as a guard at the entrance, to prevent the access of the curious public, whose faces appeared through the aperture eagerly watching the process of our toilet. Strolling out afterwards through the village, the noise of a mill several times struck my ear, and in one house I ventured to cross the threshold and observe the well-known process of grinding the corn. Two women were seated on the floor with a low cylindrical mill-stone between them, and they were bending over, putting in the corn at an aperture in the top part of their implement, and crushing it between the upper and lower stones by turning the former by means of a handle attached to it. As they leaned over the mill, chattering and laughing together, the full aptness and strength of our Lord's observation struck me forcibly, "Two women shall be grinding at the mill, the one shall be taken and the other left." Early next morning we were again on the road, and soon arrived at some ruinous heaps, which are supposed by Lord Nugent and Mr. Veitch * to be the site of ancient Bethel. I was not, however, at that time sufficiently acquainted with the arguments in favour of it to feel the full interest of such a place, the

* Lands Classical and Sacred.

altar and shrine both of Jehovah and Baal. A little further a curious cavern, low but supported by pillars, contains a reservoir and spring of clear water; although it is vaulted and propped up, yet the roof and columns appear to be of the natural rock, wrought into that state by the action of the water only. This was close against the village of Beer, through which we then passed; it consisted of some twenty houses, with a ruined church seemingly of the time of the crusaders. But our anxiety to catch sight of Jerusalem now outweighed every other feeling, and we quickened the paces of our horses, though the road was wofully stony and often dangerous. Troops of gaily-dressed pilgrims were now to be seen on the great northern track (our own road), eagerly pressing forward to, or triumphantly leaving the Holy City. There were Jews going up to the Passover, and Greeks and Latins to their Easter, which this year fell at the same time. The returning pilgrims were decorated with beads, and necklaces, and shells, staves from the Jordan, and vials of blown glass from Hebron stuck fantastically in their turbans. The country began to look more barren than ever, round hill succeeded round hill; the heat was very great, yet the feeling that each ridge was the last, and must conceal the Holy City, still

urged us on. It became a race. Well, then, at length we mount a rocky hill, and, lo! before us, glittering in the sun, the line of wall thrown into dark shadow, the domes and minarets of Omar and the Holy Sepulchre, and the embattled tower of Hippicus, standing clear out in the sunlight, backed by the blue vapoury mountains of Moab, lay that which has the name of old Jerusalem, and had been for years an image in my dreams. Glorious things are spoken of thee, city of God! and if thus trodden down, thy walls, and towers, and shrines caused us to cry with one consent, "How beautiful," how great the glory of thine ancient fame, and palace-covered mountain, must have been, the mighty temple of the everlasting God, and the well-sited Zion, the joy of the whole earth! Here we halt and gaze upon the city, a scene familiar to the mind, yet novel in its many accessories; and round us flock the bands of coming pilgrims, and stand, and kneel, and weep, and laugh for joy, as each one's temper shows his thankfulness. And women who have toiled, may-be, for many a day through heat, and fear, and poverty, to come and see Jerusalem and die, here, in the prospect of their journey's end, fall prostrate and lie groaning on the ground, and rise to take again an eager glance, as though they feared it were indeed a

dream, and not the sacred object of their journey, the city of the Lord of Hosts, Jerusalem. And here, too, on a hill like this, stood Richard, the crusading king of England, the man of lion heart and stalwart hand, he stood, and would not look. "Ah land!" said the disappointed monarch with tears, "I pray thee that I may never see thy holy city of Jerusalem since things thus happen, and since I cannot take it from the hands of thine enemies." And so, with hands upraised and eyes averted, did Cœur de Lion turn and quit the sight which gave him shame. *

In a short time we had descended into the intervening valley, passed on the left the excavated sepulchres called the tombs of the kings, and in three hours and a half from the time we started from Mai Haroba, Yussuf fired off his pistols as a "feu de joie," and we entered Jerusalem by the Damascus Gate.

* Joinville, Mémoires de St. Louis.

CHAP. VI.

JERUSALEM.

ALTHOUGH I had long trodden ground sanctified by history, and by the holy persons whom it had borne, though Tiberias had recalled to me vividly the events of our Lord and Master's ministry, and Nazareth had lent a light to illustrate the period of his mysterious youth and boyhood; it was impossible to enter Jerusalem, the scene of so many of his mighty works, of his last dread passion, and his glorious victory over death, without sensations of awe mixed with a feeling of thankfulness. There was awe in the remembrance how from yonder Olivet descended once amid a people's thundering welcome, Jesus the Son of David; awe in the thought, that on these impending hills the echoes of Hosanna! had scarce died away when they were changed into cries of "Crucify him;" awe in the thought of that forsaken cry, that horrid gloom, that awful quaking of the earth. There was glad thankfulness too; the joy of a traveller arrived at last at his toilsome journey's bourne, such joy

as he feels who, climbing the mountain's side ridge after ridge, plants his foot at last upon the topmost crest; and the purer joy of thankfulness to God that, degraded as she is, it was granted us to see the city chosen of God, once holy, loved Jerusalem. As we rode under the Damascus gate (part of the massy walls and bulwarks of the Saracens*), and passed the few ill-dressed Turkish guards which infest it, the outward show went all to tell us that we were in "El Khoods" the holy city of the Moslem faith; the pointed arch, the towering domes and lofty minarets, the dress of the inhabitants, the houses and the streets, told of a city built by Saracens, and dwelt in by Mussulmen. Yet, though the eye searches in vain to recognise the city of David or of Herod, the stronger vision of the heart discerns, even in her dust and ruins, enough of Jerusalem to satisfy the mind; and, for my part, I felt that now at length I trod in verity the very ground which had been paced by patriarchs, kings, prophets, and apostles, and by God incarnate himself.

Our party had been recommended to an hotel for travellers kept by one Meshullam, a converted

* The present walls of Jerusalem were the work of Sultan Soleiman the Magnificent.

Jew, and this was near the gate we entered. Down one steep street, slippery with brightly worn paving stones of every shape, and at every angle, the jaded horses now stumbling, now sliding, and now marvellously recovering themselves, round the sharp corner of a mouldering wall, perilling the lives of a group of Moslem children, just liberated from the Arab school-house opposite, up a short steep ascent, which indoors we should call stairs, but whose external position gives colour here to its popular name of street, and we arrived at a low door, the entrance to our hospice. Here I remained very comfortably for about five weeks, visiting thence the different localities and chief Biblical scenes in the vicinity of Jerusalem. I found Meshullam not only a very honest host, but a good guide, and I strongly advise all travellers to Jerusalem to avail themselves of his house and counsel.

It was several hours ere the fatigue of travel, the heat of a sirocco, and the satisfying of hunger and thirst, permitted me to sally forth for my first walk in the Holy City. I went with two friends first towards Mount Zion. We passed along the greater part of the road called by the Oriental Christians "Via Dolorosa," the doleful way, because they say that by it the Lord Jesus passed from his judgment to his execution.

The notion is one which, perhaps, you would fain entertain, and you endeavour to think complacently of a tradition which at least fixes the commencement of the Saviour's painful route at a site so well established as Antonia the palace of the governor.* But there is no place that I know of where tradition, "per se," carries with her so infallible an antidote as in Jerusalem. No sooner do you erect a theory upon the validity of her testimony or place your faith upon her veracity, than you discover that she stakes her reputation often upon a wild absurdity, and her truth for that which is impossible. Look here, I pray you: there is a slight seam in yonder stone, the stone of a Saracen house by the way side of this doleful road; further on is another and another. The pilgrims of the Eastern and Latin churches kiss these stones quite bright, and wear their sharp edges to smoothness, because, on the word of tradition, it was here the Saviour fell under his heavy cross, it was here He, fainting, leant, and it was here the pious matron, who gave her scarf to wipe his heated brow, received for her reward the sacred imprint of His countenance.†

* Antonia. See p. 150.

† The legend of Sta. Veronica illustrates well the charac-

That wall, the date of yesterday comparatively, undoubtedly the work of Moslem times, is solemnly attested by tradition as of Herod's day; these marks are sworn to be the print of Him incarnate, by whose righteous law of truth tradition in Jerusalem stands judged, foresworn, and perjured. Standing as though upon the threshold of the holy city, I feel it needful to say thus much upon the evidence of tradition, because few sites here can be considered independently of it, and the real interest of all is enhanced or diminished by the results of inquiry into its value. And our later writers on the East (since Dr. Robinson's day) have some of them taken up a line of argument, based entirely upon tradition, and on the notion that to assail its authority is hypercritical, an idea which, how-

ter of these ancient stories. Thus it runs: — When the Saviour toiled up the Via Dolorosa, a holy woman wiped his heated brow with a "sudarium," or napkin; to repay which act of kindness the saint received upon the cloth a miraculous impression or image of the Saviour's countenance. "True image" is in Latin "Verum Icon;" and this name, applied at first to this wonderful picture, was transferred, with difference of euphony and gender, into "Veronica," and given as the name of the saintly matron herself. The house excited the raptures of a fellow of Cambridge College who lodged there for a time, forgetful that the old streets of Jerusalem must have been at least on a very different level, if not in different directions, from the present.

ever it may shield the victims of a blind or stupid superstition, can never be satisfactory to any reasonable man. And the plea for certain local traditions as of more ancient date than others, cannot of itself be held otherwise than fallacious, unless their antiquity can be very clearly traced to apostolic times, or unless it can be shown that the times then shortly following were not fertile in invention of legends, and facile in giving them credit. The converse of which seems to me unhappily to be so very evident from the time of Justin Martyr downwards* as to make it almost impossible to rely upon the unsupported testimony, even of post-apostolic traditions. And in Jerusalem we must be always mindful that the present city stands on such a vast mound of rubbish, that most of the sites pointed out are absolutely impossible. Forty feet of rubbish was removed ere a foundation of rock could be found on Zion for the Anglican church.

To return:—Passing through narrow and winding streets, ascending often, we emerged at length upon an open space, to the south of which stand two towers, one large and more prominent, and both connected with the outer embattled

* Vide Dr. Middleton's Inquiry, p. 25.

wall of the city. The great tower has solid square foundations, which are clearly built differently from its upper part, and are exposed to you in all their greatness and strength by the large moat which is between the street and the town. This is now called the Castle of David, but has been well proved* to be that tower called "Hippicus" by Josephus, (*Wars*, Book v. c. 4. s. 3.), erected by Herod Agrippa to the memory of his friend, and named after him. Before us was the yet unfinished church of the Anglo-Prussian mission, to witness whose expected consecration we had hastened to Jerusalem.

Internally, the English church on Mount Zion is handsome, without being at all rich. The style adopted is generally what we call perpendicular Gothic, the seats are all low and free, there is a small gallery for an organ at the west end, and the nave is simple without aisles. It is paved with the beautiful pink and yellow marble which abounds in the ruins and streets of Jerusalem, and which furnished columns for the church of St. Helena at Bethlehem. The faults of the edifice are its having too much light, the flatness of its roof, and the designs of

* Robinson, Bib. Res. vol. i. 453—458.

its windows; but the wonder is rather how so few faults have been committed among the changes which have taken place in the designers and builders. Externally, its great fault is the want of a few pinnacles, a turret or tower, to carry off the heaviness of a plain parapet; but here the jealousy and envy of the Moslem are to blame, who will not admit the further adornment of a Christian edifice. It is on the whole a very creditable building, as far as stones and mortar go: the lamentable delay attending its erection and consecration is, however, the unfortunate part of it. At the disunion of our Protestant counsels at home and in Zion, the Greeks, the Latins, the Armenians smile derision, the Jew wonders, and the Moslem triumphs. It is in vain the ministers of truth would speak of peace, fellowship, love, and union, to Rome's enslaved idolaters: they point in scorn to our unfinished work, and ask what peace and union there is among us, when at every step towards the end we aim at a fresh contest arises. If under Mehemet Ali we have peace and license to begin our pious labour, subtle state-policy must interfere, and tear from a fierce but wise tyrant's hand the helpless land, and give it to Ottoman anarchy and rapacity. And certainly, in all the annals of a Christian land, few facts are more

prominent with disgrace than this, that in the rendering back of enslaved Palestine to the worst of masters, and the head of the sworn enemies of Christendom, no voice was raised, no hand outstretched to shield a minister of God sent out on his mission by England herself; or to prevent the Christian cause we had in view from the insult and hinderance certain to ensue. Degraded England! not thus it was with you of old, when even Elizabeth received in stern silence, and in sable, the herald of St. Bartholomew's massacre, and Cromwell's Mediterranean fleet protected in a foreign land the victims of religious persecution. We did not look indeed for the glow of a crusader in the breast of a modern foreign secretary, or the stout resistance of a mediæval monk in an Anglican bishop; for Lord Palmerston is not a Sieur de Joinville, nor was Dr. Alexander a Peter the Hermit; but we had a right to expect that England's representative would protect the national honour from the stigma of despising the national religion. The bishop was consistent in his quiet endurance, the statesman forgot his Christianity in his politics. The permission to proceed with building the church, which one word in season would have secured, cost afterwards an infinity of

trouble, and incurred many a weary month of delay and vexatious hinderance.

Protestantism, the reformed faith of the English church, or by whatever other name we choose to call it, is deprived in Syria of that political protection which the Greek and Latin churches enjoy. Russia and her skilful emperor find, in their connection with the Greek church, the means of securing an influence and a strongly attached party, in return for political protection and pecuniary aid. These are not stingily or grudgingly bestowed, but the Imperial pontifex of Grecian orthodoxy often stretches his strong arm to defend, and opens his hand to give. No wonder then if the Russian eagle figures prominently in those sanctuaries which Russia's liberality erected or restored.* As the numerous disciples of the Greek faith look with a favourable eye to Russia, as furnishing protection and assistance, so those of the Latin or Romish communion fix their gratitude and hopes on France. Perhaps the connection here is not so completely organised as the last, but it exists nevertheless,

* The beautiful and rich Greek chapel in the church of the Holy Sepulchre, on its recent destruction by fire, was rebuilt chiefly by Russian liberality. The Russian eagle frequently appears on the altar screens of the Greek churches.

and France, even since the days when infidelity became her fashionable religion, has found it useful to exert herself as the protector of the Roman Catholic church in the East. How differently she builds churches for her protegées from England, may be seen in Egypt, where, while a Protestant edifice remains half finished, a Latin church rose rapidly, and was quietly completed by the efforts and munificence of France. It is then a sad reflection that Protestantism, the religion of the Holy Scripture—I was was about to add, the religion of England — alone stands exposed to the insults and hinderances of its enemies in the East. Bitterness is added to the thought when we remember that when England thought it good, for a political dogma, to waste blood and treasure in supporting the dreadful rule of the Sultan in Syria, when the strict but severe order to which Mehemet Ali had brought it (one needed no escort of Bedouins then to traverse the land), was broken up into anarchy by the cannon of Napier, England then had an obligation, in handing over the victims to the spoiler, at least to ask for mercy — for toleration for her brethren in the faith. No wonder, after this, if foreign nations deride our professions of religion. No wonder if all Syria curses the meddling spirit that brought them

back a thousand senseless tyrants, instead of a single shrewd one. The operations of nations and rulers are in the hands of the Eternal God, but it should grieve us that Judæa fixes the stigma of much of her present degradation on ourselves, and this enlarges tenfold that obligation upon us which all the Christian world has received, to aid in the welfare of this interesting country, for it is no common scribe that has written this advice, "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee."

CHAP. VII.

JERUSALEM—*continued.*

I ACCOMPANIED my friends to the house of the Sardinian consul, to whom one of our party had an introduction. We received from him great civility, and the offer of a place in the gallery of the church of the Holy Sepulchre, for the ceremony of the Greek fire, which was to take place on Easter Eve. He also invited us to a great ceremony of the Latin church, with which he is by religion and station much connected; he is said, moreover, to be high in favour with the Pacha, which gives him great authority and influence. It was strange to hear his accounts of the celebrated contests between Greeks and Latins for the different localities of the Holy Sepulchre. "I have had some difficulties, this year," he said, "as the Greek and Latin Easter fell together, but I trust all has been satisfactorily settled." The contested point was, if I remember right, an altar on the reputed Calvary, on which one of the parties had a carpet, and the

dilemma was escaped by placing another table on the top of them, and a covering over that.

The difficulties on these occasions are worthy the best days of the schoolmen; but the controversy often ends with scenes more proper to the scholars of St. Louis* or the Templars, than of Thomas Aquinas. One cannot look at those terrible great three-legged candlesticks, in all the chapels of the Holy Sepulchre, without admitting their cogency in this species of debate: the realistic tendency of these recluses from the world's inquietude becomes then strikingly evident. A controversy of this nature had taken place a little before I arrived, in the church of the Nativity at Bethlehem, between a Latin and Greek monk, when the well-directed and pointed arguments of the former so demolished his antagonist, that his life was considered in danger.

The next morning after our arrival in Jerusalem, being Good Friday (April 21st), we attended the English service in the room devoted to the Anglo-Prussian mission, near to the in-

* Joinville tells us that St. Louis delivered the following opinion. "The layman, whenever he hears the Christian faith contemned, should defend it, not only by words, but with a sharp-edged sword, with which he should strike the scandalisers and disbelievers, until it enter their bodies as far as the hilt." — *Memoirs*, part i.

complete church on Mount Zion. We had a good sermon from Mr. Veitch (the chaplain to the late bishop), whose connection with the mission is now I believe at an end. But the most interesting part of the service was the baptism of Rabbi Shuphami, a converted Jew of Salonica, who had come up to Jerusalem for admission into the church, and whose case, presenting a valuable testimony to the power of divine truth, will be, or has been, doubtless made public by the reporters of the Jewish missions. The solemn aspect of the convert, who was a middle-aged man, his Jewish garb, the cluster of wondering and displeased Jews who stood near the door, and the deep solemn tone of the good bishop's voice, as he repeated the impressive words of the adult baptismal service, gave a primitive and apostolic character to the first religious service I was present at on Mount Zion.

The mind seemed half to forget that 1800 years had passed, and invested the present service with the characteristics of early Christianity. That simple chamber, enclosing a venerable overseer of the church, surrounded by his brother presbyters; the congregation made up of Christians from all parts of the world united in faith (not in language); the party baptized, and his Jewish companions; the place itself, Mount

Zion; all brought before me a scene and ideas more perfectly apostolic than I could have thought possible. And when the hymn of praise rose high and loud, of praise and thanks to God for this new display of His converting power and love, I listened to that hearty music, as though to catch some ancient strain lost since the church's infancy.

In the glare of mid-day I wandered forth from the Damascus gate, passing by a large cavern, half-natural, half-excavated in the rock, and now called the grotto of Jeremiah. As this part of the environs is as unquestionably within the wall built round Bezetha by Agrippa, either that suburb must have risen with extraordinary rapidity, or the grotto of the prophet must have been in the midst of habitations. If the latter alternative be held good, it seems more probable that the existence of the cave suggested the legend, than that the prophet should seek so near Jerusalem a place to pen his lamentations. The cave is surmounted by a small round hill, which is now covered with modern Turkish tombs; about fifty yards further (pursuing the path by the walls), near a broken reservoir for water were scattered the fragments of a trough or sarcophagus, apparently of Roman workmanship or style. As such relics are rare about

Jerusalem, it is a great pity that it was not taken care of, the broken pieces and part of one side being all that now remained. The wall is at this part defended by a deep moat, and on the other side of the path is a large grove of Olives, giving a shade, which, though poor in any other country, is here esteemed delightful. Reaching the north-east corner of the wall, a few paces onwards brings you to the brow of the steep declivity which descends to the course of the brook Kedron. Rising almost as steeply on the opposite side of this narrow valley, is the Mount of Olives, and looking, naturally, to a thicker group of trees than usual, almost in the mid-hollow, the eye falls upon Gethsemane. It is a solemn scene! Although no grateful herbage protects the eye from the glare of the sunbeams; though all is rock, and barrenness, and dust; though Kedron flows no more, and the stunted trees which stand on Olivet are few and scattered, it is that well known, often dreamt-of valley still, where God incarnate taught and prayed for us, and wept for old Jerusalem. I ascended Olivet with difficulty; but as I intend afterwards describing the scene, on the road to Bethany, I defer it at present, and return to Jerusalem, to the grand Latin festival of the

Crucifixion in the church of the Holy Sepulchre.

My friends and I went with the Sardinian Consul, preceded by his cavass or servant, (who was dressed in red, and bore a silver-headed staff,) to the court in front of the church, now lined with Turkish soldiers. We pushed through no ordinary crowd in the building itself, and then by several dark passages to a room in the second story, where we found the Latin Patriarch, to whom we were formally introduced. He had not been long here, but was looked upon as a man of tact and education; he had, moreover, been a missionary at Bagdad, and wore his beard very long. He laughed much, and talked in French without intermission all the time we were there, about travelling, the Bedouins, and the American expedition to the Dead Sea. He was handsomely dressed in purple, with some rich jewel on his finger. Having undergone introduction to this gentleman, we were escorted into the Latin chapel, which was very dark, and where many monks of the Latin convent were assembled. Large wax candles were here given to every one, though some left them behind. After waiting here a very long time, the candles round the altar were lighted, a solemn chant was struck up, and then a sermon

was delivered by a monk, in Italian, on the passion of our Lord.

A romantic mind might have been enchanted with the scene at that moment. The sombre carved woodwork of the chapel was relieved by the crowd of anxious faces turned toward the preacher; each face catching light from the cluster of lamps at the altar, while the glimmer of the tall candles served but just to dispel the darkness and discover the cowled and bearded monks who filled the stall seats round the chapel. Then the harmonious cadence of the preacher's voice, flowing like liquid music in that sweet Italian tongue, now rose into a thunder while describing the rage of angry Jewry against the suffering Redeemer, now sunk into a low and murmuring pathos, when picturing the Saviour's agony or Mary's grief. Then the procession moved onward to another chapel (which was one of those surrounding the circular church of the sepulchre), the Patriarch being arrayed in his mitre and seated in a state chair, and looking strangely different from what he had done when we left him in his room. The laughing witty man stood with half-shut eyes, hands folded in the attitude of prayer, and expression of intense suffering, the *beau-idéal* of a mitred saint of Frà Angelico or Pietro Perugino.

At the second halt a sermon was preached in Spanish on the scourging of Christ, because in this chapel half of the Pillar of Flagellation (the other half of course at Rome) is said to be duly preserved. It was here that I perceived, borne aloft before the procession, a large figure made of some pliable material, and attached to a cross. Thence, amidst a dense crowd, composed of pilgrims from the east and west, the wild half-naked disciples of the desert, and the oddly shaven enthusiasts of the caves, we paraded by degrees the whole of the edifice. Five more sermons in German, Greek, Italian, Arabic, and Spanish respectively, furnished occasions for five more stoppages in our progress. But of the accompanying ceremonies, what words but those of horror can I speak? To react upon a paltry doll the mysterious passion of our Lord and Master, to nail the senseless image to the cross, to rear aloft, to crown with thorns, and then with mock solemnity to take it down, loosing the nails which kept its arms extended, lastly, to anoint and place within the sepulchre this made-up figure, — is not this trifling and trampling upon holy things, tearing the sacred veil which Gospel writ has cast about those awful scenes, and "crucifying the Lord anew" in the very city destroyed for that very crime?

It was late when this long ceremony ended, and as I passed out of the church I looked into the Greek chapel, as their service of the Passion was about to begin. Never was scene more picturesque. Lighted by lamps suspended in the dome, the splendidly gilded screen towards the altar flickered in broken outline through the darkness of the choir, while on the pavement, in rich confusion, lay a crowd of pilgrims, permitted to rest here for the night, some half clad, others in richer garments, and all undefinedly huddled together, their white turbans and embroidered clothes standing out more prominently in the dim light. Three or four black-robed and round-capped Greek priests were noiselessly pacing up and down the crowd, and a blanket-clad desert-man stood erect near the entrance. It is a scene deeply impressed upon my memory.

Next day we returned to the church of the Sepulchre about two o'clock, to see the ceremony of the Greek fire. This abominable fraud has been so admirably exposed and so well described * by almost all our recent writers, that I do not think it needful to go into a particular relation of it.

From a lofty gallery we looked down into the circular area of the church, with the building of

* Dr. Richardson particularly.

the sepulchre in the centre, whence the fire is given out by the Greek patriarch. For nearly two hours did the vast crowd in that space howl, and dance, and struggle, and fight, with the fury of maniacs. The battle raged most fiercely against the holes whence the fire was to issue, at once the post of honour and of danger. The exhausted victor in a *mêlée* had there no time to rest upon his laurels; against his panting form a hundred hands were raised, men climbed over from behind to struggle for his place, and at last, crushed and beaten down by the candles of assailing multitudes, he ceded the dangerous honour to some other zealot, like him in turn to be attacked and yield. The Turkish soldiers, stationed in the church to keep the peace between this mob of soi-disant Christians, used their whips and swords with vigour, but yet with judgment.*

* About a month before this, Mustapha Shereif, the Pacha of Jerusalem, had delivered an address to the Latin, Greek, and Armenian patriarchs, with their clerical and lay coadjutors, in this very church of the Holy Sepulchre, enjoining them to preserve peace and harmony as an example for the people and pilgrims to follow. Then this follower of Mahomet shamed these ministers of a better dispensation, by reminding them that the peace he asked for was commanded by Jesus Christ, before whose sepulchre they were. This practical rebuke was replied to by the Latin patriarch, who is reported to have said, — "I congratulate myself that

But the conduct of the pilgrims at this festival went to confirm the well-tested theory, that it is useless to reason with madmen. In the midst of fierce howlings and pious prize fights, a procession of richly clad priests and bishops, with banners, encircled the tomb, and then the patriarch, preceded by an utensil marvellously like a large lantern, and attended by two priests and the Turkish governor, entered the sepulchre itself. Some rich Armenian had given a large sum for the first fire, and accordingly, ere long, we saw in the galleries opposite to us a blazing torch or two. Quickly the fire from below was spread. It was a sight, perhaps, unparalleled elsewhere in modern times. Each pilgrim summoned his remaining strength, and dashed towards the hole whence the fire issued. The tapers, now deprived of their wax by the important part they had played in the long battle, blazed out in quick succession as each applicant obtained a light, and lent its flame in frantic rapture to the next. Some were seen holding their hands or arms in the fire, deeming it meri-

your Excellency, being at Jerusalem to administer justice, has made yourself the conciliator of peace between Christians, — an office of the greatest honour and highest glory."

torious thus to suffer; and others threw up their arms in the air and waved aloft their streaming tapers, with yells of joy and gestures of a demon. In the midst of all this, the impudent Prometheus of the play, the Greek patriarch, passed out, and left the church amid the shouts of his silly dupes. The origin of this blasphemous imposture is to be found in a ceremony of no very modern date*, wherein the Greek patriarch of the day publicly gave out lights from the sepulchre, which were said to be lighted by an angel from heaven, to symbolise the first spread of the light of the gospel from the tomb of Christ. Symbolism has ever been found a dangerous science in the church, and as in most other cases, so then, the symbol soon began to be regarded as precious in itself. And now, when the delusion that the fire they strive for is given to the tombed patriarch by heaven itself is strongly fixed in the minds of the swarms of pilgrims who year by year come up to see Jerusalem, to announce the imposture, to give up the claim of Heaven's approval, would tell too deeply on the

* In the account of the voyage of Bernard the Wise, printed in the "Acta Sanctorum Ordinis Benedict." dated A. D. 870, occurs the earliest mention that I have seen of this fraud.

pilgrim's sufferings to make such a course acceptable to a depraved and avaricious priesthood. The sublime horror in which the Latins hold this pretended miracle was sufficiently admirable. With a convenient forgetfulness of the dismal mummeries of the last night, one of the monks affected a refined spirituality in his feelings on religious ceremonies, grieved that the sacred spots hallowed by such great events should be desecrated by such sad mockeries of religion, wondered how the Greek patriarch could sleep in his bed with the consciousness of his fraud upon him, and concluded with lamentations on the dreary condition of heretical bodies. "They are beasts," said he, "these Greeks; and then see, Signor," he added, with a sigh, "what money they take by this delusion."

On the following day, being Easter Sunday (April 23.), I attended the service * at the English chapel, which was nearly filled with strangers, this being a season when most people (Europeans especially) find themselves gathered at Jerusalem. It is always a bright spot in a traveller's experience to find in a land far from home, wherein he is a

* There are three services every Sunday; two in English, and one between in German. There is a Hebrew service every morning, but it is very poorly attended.

stranger, a sanctuary where he may hear the truth of God in his own familiar tongue, and meet his fellow-countrymen and fellow-Christians in the house of prayer. But to celebrate the Saviour's resurrection upon Zion's hill, to catch there the accents of faithful truth from the lips of our apostolic bishop, was a high privilege indeed. From Mark xvi. 2d and 3d verses, the bishop preached a solemn sermon on the resurrection, and bid us imitate the vigilance and love of the mournful night-watchers at the tomb of Jesus. Then at the table of the Lord knelt many a communicant, never again to banquet thus with those who knelt around him, till signs and sacraments shall be no more; for here were gathered men from distant lands, to-morrow to be scattered and return to their wide-spread homes. And though the multitude of tongues might show that the bond of union between the worshippers was spiritual and inward, it was pleasing to hear the words of administration issuing from the lips of the bishop in so many different languages *, as though the sacred ordinance were impatient of the trammels of speech, and conveyed its strengthening influence independent of geographical limits. "Mortals have many languages, immortals one."

* I think seven languages were used: Greek, German, Arabic, Hebrew, French, Italian, and English.

CHAP. VIII.

MOSQUE OF OMAR.

"O God, the heathen have come into thine inheritance, thy holy temple have they defiled, and made Jerusalem an heap of stones."

ONE of my first wishes at Jerusalem was to examine, and ponder on all that I might of the site and ruins of the ancient temple on Moriah. What spot on earth more hallowed than this from David's day*, who stayed with fervent

* I do not here adopt the idea that in this place the sacrifice of Isaac was prepared by Abraham. Although the Jewish traditions, as I am told, are positive in affirming this, I think Scripture is against them: 1st, Because the place of sacrifice was three days' journey from Hebron, or rather more, for then the mount was "afar off." (Gen. xxii. 34.) Hebron is not more than a day and a half from Mount Moriah, supposing Abraham to have walked with the ass; while Gerizim, for which the Samaritans contended, would be about the distance mentioned. 2dly, Had it been Mount Moriah (the expression is, "the land of Moriah"), allusion would probably have been made to topography, as was done when speaking of Abraham's meeting with Melchisedek (Gen. xiv. 17.); and from Salem's having a king, it seems

prayers the angel of wrath, to the glorious temple of his Son hallowed by the divine presence, to the rebuilt sanctuary of Zerubbabel, and to the most honoured structure of Herod, wherein the presence of Incarnate God eclipsed the splendours of antiquity? But the entrance upon that square platform of masonry and embankment, whose origin is attributed to Solomon, and much of whose present fabric may be safely assigned to Herod—a platform hanging, on the east and south, over the abrupt declivity of the valley of Jehoshaphat—and which now supports the great temple of Moslem worshippers, the Haram-esh-Shereef, or Mosque of Omar, is forbidden to all but the professors of a faith which casts the Jews, the nation of Solomon, into the lowest hell but one. No Christian or Jew dare enter there, save in disguise, without encountering the fierce attacks of the fanatical dervishes of the mosque.* And

unlike the solitary place required by the narrative. 3dly, The woman of Samaria seems to refer to this when speaking to our Lord, as a thing admitted on both sides in that day, "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain;" and the Saviour does not refute it as an error. The Samaritans, of course, assert the claim of Gerizim.

* Dr. M'Gowan was shamefully ill-treated a short time ago in returning from visiting a patient who had sent for

had it not been for the enterprising zeal and skill of Dr. Richardson, and later of Messrs. Catherwood and Bonomi, we should have been left to speculate in ignorance on the mysteries long supposed to be concealed within the domed edifice, whose site is conjectured to agree with that of the innermost sanctuary of the Jewish temple.* The best views of the mosque and its courts are obtained from the Mount of Olives, which overhangs the channel of the Kedron opposite, and from the roof of the governor's palace, which is deemed to occupy part at least of the site of the ancient fortress Antonia. I saw both of these views, the former frequently. At the angle of the outer wall of the city, which here, from the immense size of the blocks of stone (some are thirty feet in length), appears to be partly of ancient workmanship, is a great level platform, the earth and materials composing which are supported by this city wall, in the manner of a sunken fence. This platform seems an oblong parallelogram; but its form and situation may be seen upon any modern

him within the outer court of the Mosque. Instead of punishing the wrong-doers, the Sultan sent the injured Doctor a decoration.

* See Bartlett's "Walks about Jerusalem," where a most interesting letter from Mr. Catherwood is given.

map of Jerusalem. The western and northern sides are enclosed by offices and buildings connected with the mosque, through which there are several entrances from the city. These entrances, while walking about Jerusalem, are so inviting, and one is left so entirely without warning as to where they lead, that more than once I found myself upon the point of transgressing the boundaries appointed for Christians. The flashing eye of some devotee of Islam, or a short angry cry of "Haram" (forbidden) from some lingering knot of Mussulmen, were the intimations I received of the danger of progressing further. Near the centre of the great platform a part of it is elevated some few yards above the level of the rest, and this (which is also an oblong) is surrounded and supported by a wall having in the centre of each side a fine flight of steps, leading through a gateway of four arches. About the centre of this second platform stands the great mosque, an octagonal building supporting a large and beautifully-proportioned dome. This dome is an interesting link between the semicircular cupola of ancient Roman architecture, such as we see in the Pantheon, and the spire of the early Gothic; and I think we may trace the principle of the arch of either age imprinted on the very outside of its

temples. Thus the semicircular arch of the days of the Pantheon, existing still in the days of Justinian, continues in the church of Santa Sophia at Constantinople nearly the same semicircular dome, while the pointed arch of the Saracens is manifest in the cupola of the mosque of Caliph Omar.*

Great interest is added to the three divisions of ground contained in the outer and inner platforms, and the interior of the mosque itself, by the arguments of Mr. Catherwood, which go far to prove that they severally answer to the sites of the outer court of the Gentiles, the Temple, and the Holy of Holies, into which the ancient Jewish Temple was divided. We learn also, from the same valuable source, that the great platform contains subterranean passages of arches which are considered as of Roman architecture, probably of the time of Herod, and similar in style to the arch of the Golden Gate, hereafter to be mentioned. These passages are, it seems, connected with the approach to the fragment of a bridge, first published, if not noticed, by Dr. Robinson, and leading an-

* Although the name of Omar is given to this mosque, it was not built by him, but by Khalif Abd-el-Melek, from A.D. 686 to 693. (Robinson, vol. i. p. 441.)

ciently from Moriah to Zion. The outer wall shows very clearly, by its patchwork masonry, and by the great size of the stones of the under part, that whenever the upper part of the wall was rebuilt, this substructure is of a far more ancient and enduring character. The new part, which bears the evident mark of Saracenic times, runs very irregularly, as if the old wall had been built up from, and upon, its ruins. Dr. Robinson concludes, from the appearance of the older masonry, that it is of Jewish architecture, and considers the fragment of the bridge as conclusive in favour of this theory. But in Mr. Bartlett's book it is observed, with more reason, that being connected with the subterranean passages of the platform which are clearly Roman, and forming part of *an arch*, an idea which has hitherto been considered as unknown to the Jews before the Roman ascendency, it is more likely that both bridge and wall, together with the underground passages, were of the time of Herod's temple, at the earliest.* I can

* Mr. Williams considers this as part of the substructure of the church built by Justinian to the Virgin, probably identical with the present El Aksá; but if the bridge be connected with the subterranean passages, and they be of Roman architecture, this is inconceivable. Moreover, when Mr. W. is opposing any theory of Dr. Robinson's, his opinion

scarcely think, with Dr. R., that these passages were part of Hadrian's temple to Jupiter, as Jerusalem was then too insignificant to demand works so extensive; if, indeed, the style of the carved work does not argue an earlier era in Roman architecture. To return to the great mosque:—Although the colour of the cupola is dark, it is never heavy in its effect, but soars with exquisite symmetry and airiness; and this is partly owing, I suppose, to the number of fine lines irradiating from the summit down the sides: the crescent gleams on the gilded *ball*, above the whole. Once the cross supplanted it, until victorious Saladin dragged round the streets of Jerusalem, in infidel triumph, the prostrate symbol of Christianity. The external walls between the windows and doors are apparently covered with coloured tiles, arranged in patterns, or they are painted closely to imitate them. Age has given a softness to the whole, so that the bright colours are not offensive to the eye. This is all that you can see of the great mosque. More to the south end of the platform stands the smaller fane of El Aksá, which was, doubtless, originally a Byzantine

must always be accepted with caution, as he writes expressly to confute that gentleman's invaluable treatise.

church*; it is now converted into a mosque. This has a smaller dome, rising immediately from a high-ridged roof; and an apsidal termination is visible, with Byzantine details. Between the two mosques, and, in fact, all over the outer court or platform (which is chiefly covered with grass) rise beautiful trees, and amongst them two or three magnificent cypresses, whose foliage and shape cast a richness and variety over the whole of the surrounding buildings.† North-west and south-west of the great square are two minarets, lighter than those of Damascus, but inferior in beauty to those of Constantinople: the first is built from part of that building which probably occupies, in part, the site of the Castle of Antonia. Such is a rude sketch of the very interesting group of buildings

* Probably that built by Justinian in honour of the Virgin, of which Procopius gives a particular account.

† Within the inner court, which is paved, are several small domed buildings, containing wonders of the Moslem faith: stones suspended in the air, or that would be so if a solid stone wall did not support them; tombs of various saints, and fountains of special sanctity. And of all things else most interesting is the fact, that the mosque is even now, or lately was, supplied with water by the reservoirs of Solomon, beyond Bethlehem, conducted by an aqueduct; which Mr. Williams attributes, on very substantial collateral evidence, to the procurator, Pontius Pilate.

which occupy that Mount Moriah, graced from so early an age with a magnificent temple to the living God. The measure of the cup of bitterness to the Jewish nation seems here to be filled up. Their own beautiful temple defiled, and so swept away that not one stone of it is left upon another; and on its noble site a temple raised by their greatest enemies, whereunto entrance is denied them, even to weep, and ponder over their fallen greatness. What wonder if they gather, young and old, and weep tears of bitter anguish against the outer wall? A people once so favoured of Jehovah, now suffering his wrath! How often have I lingered upon Mount Olivet, over against the temple, gazing upon its domes and towers, as once my God and Saviour did! and though the scene that met his eye was far more glorious than any thing that Saracen Jerusalem can show, the incarnate God beheld, through the misty veil of time, the ruin and destruction that would come over that splendid scene, and, looking on its present beauties, wept for woes to come. If from the Mount of Olives Jesus would enter into the temple (Matt. xxi. 18—23.), the gate of the east would certainly be his course, being directly opposite; that is, if the gate now called by Franks the Golden Gate occupies the position

of the ancient one. The architecture of this gateway, its similarity to, and connection with, the interior arcade within the great platform, induced Mr. Catherwood to consider it as of Herod's time, a part of the approaches to his temple. It is evidently an ancient gateway, rebuilt into the wall by the Saracens; the architecture is Roman, and the workmanship very beautiful. There is, therefore, strong ground for believing it to be the very gate by which our Lord must so often have entered the Temple, when coming from Bethany, or the Mount of Olives. It was with this solemn thought that I often stood beneath those timeworn stones, and pondered on the scenes transacted here since those acanthus leaves were carved upon the block. How bright and new they were when loud Hosannas upon yonder Olivet announced the coming Messiah! how soon they trembled with the quaking earth and rending rocks! Perhaps it was some besieging Roman follower of Titus who broke that fretted moulding, or some victorious destroyer that marred that capital, again perchance to be restored to its pilaster, to grace the entrance to the idol fane of Jupiter. Spared by the showy piety of Constantine, and by the infidel device of Julian, this venerable

gateway decorated at last the restored wall of Suleiman; and it is not the least curious part of its history, that it was walled up in more modern Moslem times, in fear of some mysterious prophecy. "Whenever the Christians enter the holy city," so runs the oracle, "it will be by this gateway." This idea, there is little doubt, is derived from an erroneous interpretation of a passage in Ezekiel (Ezek. xl. 1—3.); but although this text may refer to the gate of the temple of Zerubbabel, yet if the present gate be, as I suppose, the one by which the Saviour entered, its present closed condition is a remarkable commentary upon the prophecy which foretold that it should be shut, because the Lord the God of Israel hath entered in by it, if not an actual fulfilment of it.*

Before closing these remarks on the site of the

* As for that most perverse interpretation put on this text of Ezekiel by Jerome and others of the fathers, and even quoted with approval by our Bishop Pearson (Creed, p. 213., Oxford), proving thereby the perpetual virginity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, it seems enough to compare the prophecy with their reading of its purport to overthrow the latter by the former. If the glosses of the Fathers (so extolled in modern times) be so generally respectable, this is certainly an example which, if unused to patristic expositions, we should charitably hope to be unique.

Temple, it is worth while to notice the very odd reasoning which is said to stimulate the Moslems in their zealous exclusion of unbelievers in their faith, from the courts of their Mosque of Omar. "Allah," says the Moslem sage, "loves to hear the prayers of the faithful, they are like sweet music in his ears, like the warbling of melodious birds, or the rippling of streams in the valley of El-Sham. It grieves him to hear them cease; and to prolong them, he defers to grant the object of their petitions. But the accents of unbelievers, idolatrous Nazarenes, or lying Jews, are ungrateful to the ears of Allah; these ascend like a noisome stench into his nostrils, and to get quit of them he gratifies their desires, and silences their demands by satisfying them. The safety of the faithful consists in the truth, that the prayers of unbelievers cannot generally find access to the throne of Allah; there are but few entrances so direct to this blissful place that all prayers uttered in them must arrive at the end of their destined courses. One of these is the Haram esh Sherief, the Mosque of the holy caliph Omar, and if an unbeliever should enter this 'Ear of God,' and 'light of the whole earth,' his horrible petitions must of necessity be heard in heaven, and Allah would grant his prayers,

were they even for the restoration of the holy city itself to the hands of the unbelievers in the Prophet. Do not we, then," asks the Moslem, "act consistently in keeping unbelievers out of this holy place, and from the sight of the sacred Rock, the glory of all the world?"

CHAP. IX.

ANTONIA.

The situation of the building now called the governor's palace, which is at present, I believe, used as a barrack for Turkish soldiers, certainly coincides with the position of the fortress described by Josephus as the town of Antonia. This is upon the supposition that the area of the great platform of the Mosque of Omar is the same as that of the temple of Herod; a supposition strengthened, as to the northern boundary, by the ancient and massive appearance of the stones at the north-eastern angle, which stones show the wall of the outer court here to have taken a rectangular course. Then close to this is a large empty reservoir or fosse, the masonry of which, on the temple side, is very remarkable; the interstices of larger stones being closely filled in with very small ones, a sort of work I did not notice elsewhere in Jerusalem. Vast heaps of rubbish prevent the bottom and ends of this reservoir from close examination; but on the east side it runs nearly up to the barrack just men-

tioned. This tank is called in modern times the Pool of Bethesda; but of course the circumstances of the siege of Antonia by Titus must have much altered its form and character, if it be really that interesting spot; and as Josephus speaks of a great fosse between Antonia and the town, this may be in reality (as Dr. Robinson suggests) only a part of that ditch, the remainder whereof has been filled in. But though in itself uncertain, this fosse gives additional strength to the idea, that the barrack stands on part of old Antonia; and when we reflect on the great interest connected with that fortress and palace, we shall think no proof of the identity of its site superfluous. For here it must have been that the Saviour of the world was led bound to Pilate when governor of Judæa, and underwent those remarkable examinations, wherein by his silence he fulfilled the prophetic character of the Messiah (Isa. liii. 7, 8.), and by his answers asserted his office as king in the very presence of his murderers. And this Antonia was probably the castle mentioned in Acts (xxi. 37.; and xxii. 24.), on the stairs leading up to which St. Paul made his eloquent defence and sermon in Hebrew to the enraged multitude of Jews who were bent on his destruction. In confirmation of which, we find these stairs mentioned by Josephus in

his account of this fortress.* (Joseph. de Bell, lib. v. c. 5. s. 8.)

The pools of Jerusalem within and without the walls are so connected with one another that I shall mention them together, though very briefly, as they have all been so well described already by Robinson. I should scarcely have mentioned them at all, but that they are in some degree mixed up with that long disputed and difficult question, the situation of the ancient walls of Jerusalem. The most ancient pool, at least in situation, is that situate to the south-west of the Jaffa Gate, at the commencement of the water-course, which widens and deepens into the valley of Hinnom, and known as the upper Pool of Gihon. This is in all likelihood the upper water-course of Gihon, stopped or dammed round by Hezekiah (2 Chron., xxxii. 30.), the water from which he brought straight down to *the west side of the city of David.*

This describes the exact site of the second or lower Pool of Gihon, which last seems to be the pool whose construction is referred to in 2 Kings,

* These stairs are now said to be at Rome, near St. John Lateran; but there are incredulous men who wonder how they escaped the destruction of Antonia by Titus.

xx. 20., and which is formed by erecting a great stone enbankment across the Valley of Hinnom to the west of Zion, and is still in good preservation, though I never saw water in it. This must also be "the pool that was made," mentioned by Nehemiah (iii. 16.), as its position between "the place over against the sepulchres of David," and "the house of the mighty" (which I take to be the stronghold of David, answering to the present tower of Hippicus), clearly shows. Isaiah refers of course to this lower pool, when, reminding the Jews of their past works, he says (xxii. 9—11.), "Ye gathered together the waters of the lower pool."

To the same king, Hezekiah, we must attribute the original formation of a large reservoir of water, which now passes by his name, situate near to the Jaffa Gate, and within the walls. This, I think, we gather from several passages of Scripture, that invaluable guide in the topography and history of Palestine. In 2 Kings, xx. 20. we read that Hezekiah made a pool (already mentioned) "and a conduit, and brought water into the city;" which exactly answers to the present arrangement of this third "Pool of Hezekiah," and the conduit or aqueduct which still supplies it with water from the "old"

or "upper pool" of Gihon.* And as this old pool is without the walls, and the "Pool of Hezekiah" (as it is termed) is a large fosse within them, and the conduit is the means whereby the water of the former is brought into the city and discharged into the latter, so this also agrees with the scriptural accounts, which tell us that there was "made also a ditch between the two walls for the water of the old pool" (Isa. xxii. 9. 11.), and that Hezekiah (as above stated) made a conduit and brought water into the city. This conduit or aqueduct, from the upper or old pool to that within the walls, is also mentioned in Isaiah (xxxvi. 2.), where the prophet recounts that "Rabshakeh stood by the conduit of the upper pool, in the highway of the Fullers' field." [And again in Isa. vii. 3.] As the conduit runs up to and under the wall, not far from the Jaffa Gate, so we see that Rabshakeh standing by it might easily speak in the hearing of the people on the wall. (Isa. xxxvi. 11.)†

* There was a conduit and pool in the days of Ahaz (Isaiah, vii. 3.); so that we must consider Hezekiah rather as the restorer than the original constructor of the conduit. He probably covered it in to conceal the stream from the notice of his enemies.

† Since this was written, I have read Mr. Williams's theory of the ancient pools of Jerusalem. It shows great

Such being the age and order of the three pools and conduit (I do not say that the present masonry is all ancient, but that they probably retain their ancient position), we gather very distinctly, I think, that in old Jerusalem the upper and lower Pools of Gihon were without the city, and that the third pool was within and between two walls; which two walls must have been the second and third walls mentioned by Josephus, which, both commencing at the Tower of Hippicus as a starting point, must, at the site of the fosse or pool, have been not very wide asunder.

There is a portion of the great wall which encloses the area of the Mosque of Omar, looking

research and ingenuity; and subsequent discoveries may confirm his views. But surely Solomon did not build his temple without a good supply of water, and the conducting of it to that building would claim to be his work. And the situation of the Pool of Siloam, if it were between two walls, as Mr. W. supposes, would scarcely answer to the expression, "he brought water into the city," which should be applicable to a pool made by Hezekiah. But the chief objection is the "*west side of the city of David*," to which no pool but the one somewhat silently passed over by Mr. W. (namely, that called the lower Pool of Gihon) at all answers. If Siloam was supplied by the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the Fullers' Field, as Mr. W. seems to suppose, that conduit existed before the days of Hezekiah. (Isaiah, vii. 3.)

outwards towards the south-west, which, from the magnitude of the stones and the peculiarity of the masonry, is generally considered to be antique, and the Jews have long esteemed it as part of the foundation wall of their temple. Great stress has been laid by Dr. Robinson and some others upon the fact, that these stones are bevelled or cut off in an obtuse angle at the edges. But this is not, I fear, generally to be taken as a sign of Jewish architecture. The Saracenic part of the walls of Jerusalem, and the inclosure of the tomb of Abraham at Hebron of the same style, are instances which occur to me where this peculiarity has been followed. At the same time I readily admit that in all great ruins and buildings, where we have evidence of Jewish constructions, these bevelled stones are almost universally present, and frequently seem to have been used over again by succeeding builders, and probably copied as an easy decoration. There is one more curious feature in all reputed Jewish ruins and edifices, and this is, a number of square or oblong holes, shallow and often wide apart, cut in the face of the stones employed in building. These are very irregularly placed, which may perhaps be accounted for in some measure by the stones occupying positions different from their original ones, or would agree

with the supposition that they were made as a means of raising the stones to their place, or of fastening clamps in them when raised. Yet these can scarcely be the objects, as the smaller stones are frequently marked in this way while the large ones are free, and there are sometimes four or five such holes in one stone. I saw them in the old part of the buildings of Baalbec, in the Tower of Hippicus, in numberless ruins about Jerusalem, and in the old part of the wall near the Jews' place of wailing.

On a Friday afternoon this place is an interesting resort. Thither, to what they look upon as the sole remnant of their once glorious temple, do many of the Jews of Jerusalem resort, and stand and sit and bend in prayers and tears against this massive relic. The women are loudest in their cries, and mingle their mournful lamentations for past glory with fervent prayers for Messiah's advent; prayers addressed not to Jehovah's ear, but to the safe conduct of those Jewish mediators, Sarah, Rebecca, Leah, and Rachael. Close to the wall, and whispering and murmuring their prayers into the very chinks and holes of it, are knots of Jewish matrons, fixed in the creed that underneath those mighty blocks is buried "Shechinah," to be unearthed when He, the looked and longed-for King, shall

come to wreak his awful vengeance on the uncircumcised, and raise his scattered people from the dust to wealth, and thrones, and happiness, and Heaven, Himself at once their worldly and their Heavenly everlasting King, Messiah. And crouching on the ground, their bowing heads half hid by a flowing shawl thrown over them, you see old men, with beards which touch their waist, reading in silent mournfulness the lamentations of their prophet Jeremiah, or the sad poetry of those psalms penned by the captive exiles of Babylon, glancing ever and anon their eyes upwards; and though through all their days this prayer has seemed to be unheeded, yet faithful still in olden promises, they ask their God yet — yet to see Messiah. These men are a fine lesson of faith and trust in God, which we, under a clearer dispensation, and with more knowledge of Messiah's character and love, would do well to imitate. In all his tribulations and misery, amid the insults and scorn of men, the pious Jew can think upon Messiah, can contemplate in spirit his enemies overthrown, and proudly smile in thinking of the certain triumph of his nation. But alas! there are too few of this kind of men in Zion; many have ceased to think upon the King's approach, and all deny that ever He came among them and was murdered.

CHAP. X.

HOLY SEPULCHRE.

I HAVE hitherto abstained from describing the church of the Holy Sepulchre, and the sites said to be connected with it, further than was needful to illustrate the account of the ceremonies I saw there at Easter. The subject has been so much discussed, and is one which every visitor to Jerusalem, if he stay there at all, must hear so constantly spoken of, that it might be supposed to be worn threadbare in every point of view; but though I would willingly have passed over these sites without affirming or disputing their authority, yet the dreadful truth that the Church of the Sepulchre and its chapels are the sepulchre of the Christian religion of the East, wherein all vitality is swallowed up, wherein the very stones receive the homage which belongs to the Redeemer alone, impels me to note one or two reasons which convince me of the high improbability (to say the very least) that the sites adopted are the real ones.

If we take a map of Jerusalem, and suppose a

line of wall commencing at the Tower of Hippicus and running to the angle of the Temple wall against the site of Antonia, we should probably conclude that the site of the Church of the Sepulchre is within such a boundary of the city; but if we include within this boundary the Pool of Hezekiah (as already mentioned), we shall find, that to exclude the church a very sudden turn must be made, possible certainly, but highly improbable; and such a turn running round three sides of the pool would most likely have caused Josephus to mention this pool as a means of ascertaining the course of the wall.

The importance of this observation consists, of course, in the necessity which there is to prove that the now called sites of Golgotha and the Sepulchre were without the ancient second wall mentioned by Josephus; for if they are within this wall, they cannot, consistently with Scripture, be the real places. Lord Nugent has recently endeavoured to set up as conclusive the traces of an ancient wall in Jerusalem, and has strung together some ingenious arguments and curious facts; but a personal examination of the details of the streets of Jerusalem shows, not only in the lines he mentions, but almost everywhere, evidences of masonry as ancient and massive as that which he selects. Moreover, one fact appears

to have been too much forgotten, the immense pile of rubbish which (as I have before observed) covers the site of ancient Jerusalem. Forty feet of this accumulation of the dust and ruin of centuries was displaced by the builders of the English church ere the rock of Zion was found, and often, in planting in the gardens which occupy much of the present space within the walls, the digger strikes his iron against the fragments of marble columns deep sunk into the ground. And I saw an excavation for a sewer while in Jerusalem, of about fifteen feet in depth, near the Damascus Gate, where the soil, finely pulverised and filled with broken pottery and bones, was still the substratum. Under these circumstances, the discovery of any particular cave seems to me a matter of great improbability.

An ingenious attempt has been recently made by Mr. Finlay to substantiate the evidence in favour of the modern sites, by considering the information in the possession of Constantine at the time of the erection of the first Church of the Sepulchre at Jerusalem. He concludes, from the well known excellencies of Roman statistics, that the Emperor must have searched public documents, and proved the site of Joseph of Arimathæa's tomb without difficulty. Now Eusebius, a contemporary, who would not certainly have

been silent had such incontestable documents been discovered, points to *a Temple of Venus erected by Hadrian* as the means of preserving the site, and not to archives; and instead of Constantine's considering the discovery of it as a simple matter, he expressly, in his letter to Macarius, calls it "a miracle," which "as far transcends the capacity of human reason as heavenly things are superior to the interests of men." — (Euseb. Vit. Const. c. xxx.) *

I have not much respect, I confess, for the Theodorets, Sozomeus, &c. of the succeeding age as historians, but I did not expect any believer in the Holy Sepulchre to throw overboard their very circumstantial accounts of the discovery of the places of our Lord's passion, and the wonderful things which they report to have been then and there done for the edification and comfort of the aged Helena and the assembled faithful.†

* He also, in the same letter, calls it "a wondrous fact, that no power of language seems adequate to describe;" "a fact which truly surpasses all admiration;" "an event which all the wise men in the world could not worthily speak of." And Eusebius himself, in describing (c. 28.) the finding of the Sepulchre, says that, on uncovering the ground, it was discovered, "contrary to all expectation."

† Mr. Finlay thinks that the Pagans, in Julian's time, would have accused the Christians, if the latter had imagined

But we live in an age of incredulity, and the statistical records of Constantine will, perhaps ere long, be reckoned as apocryphal as the miraculous finding of the three crosses, and the supernatural detection of the one sought for.*

Believing, therefore, that the sites adopted are not the real ones, I cannot feel surprised that God in his wisdom has hidden these places from us. Such, surely, has ever been the course of his dealings with us, for the Omniscient knows well the carnality of men's hearts, and how they will transfer the worship of a spirit into a superstitious reverence for places and things visible. Was it not for this cause that the tomb of Moses, the great teacher of the law, was expressly concealed from Israel, and that the greatest of the prophets, Elijah, was taken unburied into heaven? And if the sepulchre wherein He lay, who with Moses and Elijah was transfigured on the mountain, be also concealed from mortal gaze and blind superstition, can we wonder when we see the trash and trumpery, the ignorance, fanaticism, and idolatry which hide and disfigure and pollute the fancied Calvary, and the marble chapel which they call the Sepulchre?

those sites. We have really too few writers on Jerusalem of those days in our time to assert that they did not.

* Theodoret.

The Church of the Sepulchre has no beauty in the interior to recommend it, consisting of a large dome on two tiers of arches, painted with very wretched taste. The Greek chapel has some rich modern decorations, and a splendid gilded and painted altar-screen, which produces a fine effect. At the back of this there is an interesting chapel below the level of the ground, where the legend is that the crosses were found: it is consequently termed the chapel of the "Inventio Crucis." Here are some interesting Byzantine capitals, fitted to what seem to be the columns of older buildings. Up-stairs, near to the entrance to the church, is the access to the Calvary. On arriving in the room so designated, you find under an altar three holes (far too near for a real execution to have taken place, as it seemed to me), in which you are told that the three crosses fitted. Groans from prostrate pilgrims meet your ears, tawdry ornaments, smart dolls, and execrable pictures salute your eyes. The great triumph is the fissure in the rock, which I think is really a crack caused by some natural convulsion: but as Scripture does not note any particular place where "the rocks rent," but speaks of it generally, I suppose it is more likely that the fissure suggested the Golgotha than that it bears testimony to the truth of the

site. In the sepulchre itself you can see nothing but a closet covered with marbles, lamps, and bad pictures, and a sarcophagus unlike any of the Jewish sepulchres around Jerusalem. A low doorway into an outer chamber, which is quite dark, could have prevented the possibility of any one from without seeing two angels, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain (John, xx. 11.); and indeed I think that the scriptural narrative would not admit of two chambers, as there are here. But of course I do not attempt to reconcile the difficulties of this place, as I believe them to be insuperable. The exterior façade fronting the square before you enter the church is certainly very beautiful when connected with the groups of brightly-coloured people always clustering around the door. The architecture is of the time of the early Crusades, and the work is good enough to make one regret the loss of the coeval monuments which this church once contained, irrespective, of course, of their great personal interest. I longed indeed, for the man's sake and his noble memory, to stand and see the tomb of Godfrey of Bouillon, the paladin of courage and humility, with reason dignified by Fuller as "the good monarch." The work itself, no doubt, was beautiful; it has perished in some of the

many zealous battles which took place within the church; but Godfrey's splendid answer is immortal, who, when elected by the consenting voice of the army to the high dignity of first king of Jerusalem, replied, "That never would he wear a crown of gold where his Redeemer wore a crown of thorns." — Oft quoted speech, but rarely imitated example!

In the court fronting the Church of the Sepulchre a mart of beads, crosses, carved shells from Bethlehem, and other such-like tempting wares for pilgrims, is always held during the great swarm of palmers, about the time of Easter; and noise and confusion (to those who have not witnessed the ceremonies held within the church) seem here to hold their highest revels.

Let us turn from these strange scenes, conveying to us only the want of vitality and discipline in the Greek and Roman churches, to the mountain loved of God, now desolate and silent, the mournful Zion. Although the north-western part and summit of this hill are still within the walls, and bear the tower of Hippicus, the English church, the pool of Hezekiah, the Armenian convent, with its rich property, and the Jewish quarter, yet the larger portion of Mount Zion is excluded from the present city of Jerusalem,

and lies open to the Tyropæon, or Valley of the Cheesemongers on the east, and the Valley of the Son of Hinnom on the west and south. To explore the site of that quarter of ancient Zion which covered the declivities reaching down to these valleys, we pass through the small gate somewhat to the south of the Armenian convent, and find a road immediately before us leading towards two groups of buildings, the first belonging to the Armenian convent, where you may be shown the house of Caiaphas, the prison of our Lord, the stone which closed the Holy Sepulchre, and the place where the cock crew after St. Peter's denial of his Master, all conveniently preserved in one group of buildings, with the modern and more authentic tombs of the Armenian patriarchs of Jerusalem. Descending the road a little more to the south, we arrive at the second group, containing, as they tell you, the tomb of David, and the Cænaculum, or room where the Last Supper was prepared.* The first, which I was anxious to see, is inaccessible to all but Moslems; and the authenticity of the second is destroyed, if the first be a genuine site, by the fact of its surmounting, or standing positively

* The room where the apostles were assembled at the feast of Pentecost.

over, the tomb of David (a thing quite inconsistent with the Scripture narrative);* and the wall, consisting mainly of arches of a pointed style, apparently not older than the ninth century, even divests it of that interest which would have attached to it had it even been the ancient church of the fourth century mentioned by Cyrill.† There are cemeteries to the north-east of these buildings, but, with the exception of one or two European graves, they possess but little interest. The tomb of Costigan, the unfortunate explorer of the Dead Sea, is in one of those not very far from the wall, and is visited by most travellers. For myself, I know of no part of Jerusalem or its environs which seemed so full of attraction as the crumbling, half-cultivated declivities of Zion. Away from the savage life of Jerusalem, surrounded by the hills which "stand round about," and treading at every step on the stones and dust of a once proud and splendid city, now levelled and desolate,—those were solemn contemplations on the "chosen" hill of God. So,

* Matthew, xxvi. 18. The sepulchre of David mentioned as existing by St. Peter (Acts, ii. 29.) in his day, could not surely be in the house of any man.

† Vide Robinson, vol. i. p. 357. Cyrill, however, considers the church of his day as the church of the Apostles, when they assembled at Pentecost.

I have often taken my horse, and, leaving him by some stout olive-tree or scarlet-flowered pomegranate, have wandered on through scanty cornfields and caverned rocks, now only tenanted by the passing fox or jackall, and then have sat and read and thought on Zion as she was, and is, and shall be, by the promise of her God. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth was "Mount Zion," when God was known in her palaces for a sure refuge. Here rose the song of glad triumph for her grandeur; yet surely warning notes were mingled with the chorus, when to "walk about Zion, and tell the towers thereof, to mark well her bulwarks, and consider her palaces,"* was deemed a duty, that following generations might receive, not Zion's ancient splendour, but its memory. And so it passed: for her iniquity and base ingratitude, while yet she stood in beauty, the prophet spoke the will of God concerning her; and as I plucked the ears of corn around me, and gathered fragments†

* Psalm xlviii.

† The whole of the declivity of Zion seems to be formed, except in one or two places towards Hinnom, of that dark dust which indicates an ancient city. This is all mixed with many pieces of broken pottery, tesseræ, and small pieces of a sort of highly-glazed fresco (chiefly blue); and in the road down the hill-side to Siloam the rains have exposed the

from the dust of centuries, I witnessed to the literal fulfilment of this prophecy:—"Therefore shall Zion for your sake be ploughed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps." (Micah, iii. 12.) Ay, it is even so! where once stood those palaces where God was known, are now a few poor terraced fields and gardens; where once the hum of God's loved city rose, and where God's only Son oft walked as Man, was heard at present nothing but the hoopoe's mournful cry, the angry call of the windhover, or the shrill note of the bee-catcher.* Shall it always be thus? shall the servants of God always look on the stones of Zion, and pity thus to see her in the dust? No, surely not; for He that carries out so literally all his denunciations, shall not His promises be sacred too? "The Lord shall build up Zion, and gather together the dispersed of Judah." (Psalm cxlvii. 2.) "The Lord thy God in the

course of ancient walls, in which are many curious fragments of columns and pottery, &c.

* *Merops apiaster*, which I saw in great numbers in all the valleys about Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Nablons. By all accounts it is, however, only migratory. In flight it resembles the swallow; its note is much like the dottrel, or stone curlew, a single cry at intervals; its plumage varies much, but in all has an exquisite variety of blue, brilliant green, yellow, bright amber, black and white. Two feathers of the tail are longer than the others.

midst of thee is mighty: he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy" (Zephaniah, iii. 17.); and more than this rebuilding shall there be, for Zion shall be "sought of all the world;" and "many nations shall come and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and He will teach us of His ways; for the law shall go forth of Zion." (Micah, iv. 2.)

CHAP. XI.

SILOAM.

If we pass down the steep of Mount Zion on its eastern side, we arrive at a slight "wady," or valley, passing from the south-west corner of Moriah down into the channel of the Kedron, very near the place where it is joined by the valley of Hinnom; and this wady is the ancient Tyropœon, or valley of the cheesemongers, once much larger and better defined, but now scarcely perceptible in Jerusalem itself, where it was filled up by the Asmonœans, as Josephus tells us (Wars, v. 4.). Just where this valley is lost in the greater one of the Kedron, is the reservoir and spring of water which is called the pool of Siloam.

This is undoubtedly the Siloam of Scripture * and of Josephus, and its sequestered position, though destitute of the beauties of verdure, gives it a charm superior to any other fountain round Jerusalem. On the one side is the declivity of

* See Dr. Robinson, vol. i. p. 493.

Zion, and on the other the bluff rock of Ophel, through whose base a channel has been cut for cool Siloam's waters.*

An oblong tank, receiving and discharging a not very copious stream, with ruined sides, worn steps down to the water, and a few broken columns, without capitals on one side, rising from the bottom of the pool, these are the materials which now compose Siloam's fount. Women and children with their water-pots, and fellaheen (Arabs of the field) filling their quat coarse waterskins, scarcely disturb your thoughts, though not unfrequently they break the solitude of that little glen; for the dark-skinned, black-haired Arab, with his rough white shirt, his sinewy limbs, his bright eyes, and his scarlet turban, and the white flowing head-dress, loose drapery, and majestic gait of the women, impart a living character to the scene, not inconsistent with its old associations. 'Twas to this pool our Lord sent that poor blind man whose cure we read of in the Gospel (John, ix. 7.); and as it is probable that Siloam was close to, if not

* The indefatigable Robinson scrambled through this channel, a work of great difficulty, and found that it communicated with the fountain to the north-east, called the fountain of the Virgin.

within the wall of ancient Jerusalem *, no doubt its margin was trodden by our Lord and his disciples.

Not many yards below the spot where the valleys of Jehoshaphat and Hinnom join, in the channel of the Kedron, is another fountain, consisting of a deep well, with a domed covering of Saracenic times, supplied by a slow spring of living water. This is a very important reservoir for Jerusalem, although the quantity of water which daily collects is not enough for half the day, when it is left again to accumulate. It now bears the name among the natives of the "Well of Job," but it is undoubtedly the "En-rogel" of Scripture, the border of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin (Joshua, xv. 7, 8.; xviii. 16, 17.), and is the scene of the attempt of Adonijah to elevate himself, instead of Solomon, to the throne of his father David (1 Kings, i. 9.). Here we find a coincidence illustrative of the truth of the Scripture narrative, for when Solomon was taken by Zadok, Nathan, and Benaiah, with a stately and sacerdotal train, down to Gihon †, the sound of

* If Mr. Williams's theory of Siloam be esteemed correct, or most probable, then this pool was between two walls, which he supposes girdled this part of the city.

† It seems to have been a custom to anoint monarchs by

the trumpets and the shouting of the people at his proclamation reached the ears of Adonijah and his guests at En-rogel, and struck terror into their hearts. And the distance is just such as by this account we might expect, near enough to hear the noise, but not so close at hand as to convey at once its meaning.* All the way from this well up the valley of Jehoshaphat, until you have passed the village of Siloam, are the best cultivated gardens I saw about Jerusalem, terraced and taken care of. A fine old mulberry-tree, hedged in by stones, has given rise to all sorts of legends, changed and abandoned every few years. In the gardens themselves are fine fig-trees, olives, pomegranates now (in April) scarlet with blossom, and mulberries, while on the ground are lettuces, artichokes, gourds, and many vegetables for the use of the city.

As we are without the city walls, we will pass up the valley of Jehoshaphat by the rugged road near the channel of the Kedron, the steeps of Zion, and then of Moriah, rising inaccessibly on the left, and pouring their heaps of pulverised rubbish quite down to the very bottom of the

the side of water; so this, I suppose, was the pool of Gihon, before it had been stopped by Hezekiah.

* Mr. Williams's Gihon is about the same distance from En-rogel.

dry watercourse. On our right rises first the lofty hill called the Mount of Offence by the Christians, on the overhanging side of which is the naked, half-excavated village of Siloam, where the savage men and children scowl upon the Frank passer-by like sea-birds perched upon a rock.

After passing the village, the hill becomes less lofty until we get round the south-western angle of Moriah, where, in the side of a rising rock on our right, we see the three ancient tombs given respectively to Absalom, St. James, and Zacharias by the believers in legendary Jerusalem, for no other reason than, because they did not like to confess the truth, that nobody knows any thing whatever about them. Surrounded by a profusion of scattered stones, which cover the whole side of the mountain from Siloam to the road from Jerusalem to Bethany, stones inscribed with Hebrew characters (some as old as 400 years), the memorials of those Jews who come from all parts of the wide world to lay their bones here in this valley of Jehoshaphat, we might speculate at great length on the real age of these three remarkable structures. Had they been in Italy, I should at once have concluded them to be of Hadrian's time, the massive semi-Egyptian charac-

ter and debased Greek architecture intimating as much; but as they are in this land of all sorts of styles and architectural anachronisms, I feel completely in the dark. Had not Josephus been entirely silent about their existence in his time, I should have hazarded a conjecture that they were the tombs of the prophets, and rightly referred to by our Lord as "built" and "garnished" in his day.* (Matt. xxiii. 29.) The largest one, called the "Hand of Absalom" by the Jews, is not without beauty; but a small tree growing in its upper part will soon destroy it, if not taken care of. It is in a broken aperture in this tomb, I think, that the Jews thrust in pieces of the Law written out, which occasionally fall into the hands of some learned Pundit, who rejoices in his supposed discovery of such very authentic manuscripts. Over the central tomb, which has been bestowed upon St. James as his place of retirement during the time of our Lord's lying in the tomb, the modern Jew sits and listens, and deems he hears the waters of Gehena, to which abode of wicked souls he

* I say in his day, because our Lord distinguishes the deeds of that generation from those of their fathers. "Ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them." (Luke, xi. 47.)

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fancies this an entrance. * This group of three tombs (there is a half uncovered entrance to a fourth behind the "Hand of Absalom") is one of the most picturesque things about Jerusalem, and if the valley were not here so unfortunately barren, would be really beautiful. And now, as we advance northwards up this venerable defile, what is that whitened wall, new from the plasterer's hands, which meets our eye? Do not the thickening olive-trees, the adjacent bridge, and the opposite, though highly elevated gate of the city, suggest to us a thought that this, or hereabouts, must be Gethsemane?

Yes: it was to such a place that "Jesus went with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered and his disciples" (John, xviii. 1, 2.); a spot retired from gaze, and loved of Him, for "Jesus ofttimes resorted thither with his diciples." Now no longer a shade or quiet retreat from men, not now, as then, if this be old Gethsemane, a solitude for prayer or meditation; and the gay flowers and verdure refuse to cover the sun-dried rocks of old Olivet, since God incarnate shed upon their leaves the blood-drops of his agony. There are

* These monuments most closely resemble those at Petra, so as to produce a conviction that they are contemporary. . . .

eight olive-trees, old, gnarled, and venerable, shedding a scanty shade from their light dusty foliage; so old they look, that, gazing on their wrinkles, you learn to think they stood since old Jerusalem, but then you find the olive-tree not slow of growth, and many others in the land seem just as great as these.

But after all, when most olive trees are felled they rise anew, the young shoots sprouting from the ruined stumps, a sort of phœnix among trees, so that we can think it possible, that in these ancient trunks we see at least descendants of the trees that waved their branches over the Saviour's head, or supported his fainting form in that tremendous hour of trial, when all the impending horrors of the cross, and all the just wrath of God against a sinful world were pressing on his human soul. But now a lofty wall excludes the passer-by from gazing on these old memorials (though one or two trees without the wall seem of the same age), and a low doorway admits you in the presence of a custodian (if he be luckily not in the Latin convent in the city) to a framework of whitewash quite inconsistent with the fine picture which these olives present. I believe, however, that the wall had become necessary, as all the pilgrims used to pull the trees to pieces at Easter as relics. Although

the channel of the Kedron runs considerably below these trees, yet to look upon them from the walls of Jerusalem, on the top of the hill of Bezetha, they appear quite in the valley. Over the channel, a little higher up, is a bridge, and just beyond it a small chapel dedicated to the virgin and called her tomb, to which you may descend by a flight of steps.

But let us here ascend the Mount of Olives *, though the road be steep and somewhat rugged. How toilsome is the ascent, made still more so by the sun's fierce glare reflected from the white rocks, and loose flint stones † which everywhere meet our eyes. A few poor olive trees scarce vindicate its ancient name at present, straggling thorn bushes, some scanty patches of corn, the rest dust, rock, stones. Yet even thus, we feel a pleasure to tread these time-worn paths, to seat ourselves upon these venerable rocks, and

* Called by the Arabs "Jebel Tur," the same name they give to Mount Gerizim.

† These flints are often very beautifully varied with streaks of black and white and red, and abounding in the mountains about Jerusalem. I found, also, crystals of limestone on the eastern declivity of Olivet. There is here of landshells a *Pupa*, about the size of a barleycorn; the large *Helix*, common from Nazareth to Hebron, and the smaller white *Helix*, which abounds about every shrub in the desert; marl hills west of the valley of the Jordan.

hold a mysterious fellowship with the very stones; because these paths did Jesus tread, these rocks were perhaps His chapel and His couch, and when He entered Jerusalem in triumph, from Olivet, if men had held their peace, these very stones would then for shame have raised the shout of "Hosanna to the Son of David," as he himself has told us (Luke, xix. 40.). Of all parts of the mountain, that part over against the Temple area, with all Jerusalem lying at our feet, possessed for me the greatest interest. Here Jesus stayed, and, looking over Zion, and the mountain of the Lord's House, then in full life and beauty, the mind of the incarnate Deity rolled back on Israel's history, remembered all Jerusalem's ingratitude, recalled his proffered mercies and forbearance, and looking into futurity, beheld the greatest crime about to be committed — the solemn rejection of Messiah, and, not the crime alone, but all the just retribution of Heaven, and while the God saw the desolation to come, the man Christ Jesus wept over the glorious city before him (Luke, xix. 41.).

Of course there are all sorts of sites pointed out by the legend-loving guides of Jerusalem; you are shown the place where our Lord taught the Lord's prayer to his Apostles, the exact spot where He wept over Jerusalem, the cave

where the Apostles, under twelve arches (for were they not, argued my guide, twelve in number?) made the twelve articles of the creed, and on the summit you may see the print of his footstep in the rock, the last he made before His ascension from that very spot. "There were," says your guide, in a dismal tone, "originally two of these impressions, one for each foot; but, alas! one has been taken away by some pilfering zealots, and the other only remains as an infallible proof that this is the very indubitable spot."

My guide, who was a Latin Christian (an Arab), had always one argument, which he considered unanswerable. If any wonder brought an expression of incredulity to my lips, or any absurdity, a passing smile, or shake of the head, Tomaso was always ready: "Well then, Cawadjee, if *this* is not the place, where is it? Tell me that?" But it was quite natural to expect a guide in Syria to consider a knowledge of the exact site of each transaction, as an essential part, and indeed the foundation of the Christian religion, when we find learned men who must (or ought to) know better, even in our own land, seriously favouring and playing with a similar chaos of ideas and principles. The ancient church of the Ascension, Eusebius tells us, was

founded by Helena, "on the very summit of the Mount." * He tells us, also, of a cave on this very spot, and that the church was built "in remembrance of Christ's ascension from the mountain top." † Yet the scripture narrative does not seem to me to correspond with this idea, for in the account of the ascension, in St. Luke (c. xxiv. 50.), we read distinctly "he led them out as far as to Bethany;" and though, in Acts, i. 12., we find that the disciples returned "from the mount called Olivet," yet, it is added, "which is, from Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey," which corresponds better with Bethany than the top of the mountain.‡ Besides, Bethany itself is on the eastern slope of Olivet, and to get to Jerusalem the Apostles must, of course, have passed upon, if not over, the mountain. I would not have said so much on this (for all has been better discussed before by Robinson and others), but to show the extreme uncertainty of the statements of Eusebius, and

* Eusebius, Vit. Const. c. xliii. † Ibid. c. xli.

‡ Mr. Williams defends the traditional site of the ascension (Holy City). We want proof, however, of two facts before Eusebius's "mountain top" will stand: 1st, that Bethany is more than a sabbath day's journey; and, 2dly, that any thing like a parochial or district nomenclature was adopted in the days of our Lord.

the danger of accepting them without strong collateral evidence. For we have here statements by him*, that "in a cave, in the very spot where Christ ascended from the mountain top, authentic history informs us the Saviour imparted mysterious revelations to His disciples." If this authentic history be scripture, we do not find any such statement in it; if it be other documents which we have not, they run counter to scripture, which certainly overthrows the mountain top as the place of Christ's ascension, for no subtlety of argument or assumption that districts bore the name of villages, seems to me to make out "Bethany" to be the summit of the Mount of Olives, from which it is not even visible; and there is no trace whatever of its having anciently been much nearer. †

* Ibid. cc. xliii. xli.

† When David passed up Mount Olivet in his flight from Absalom, we read that he met Hushai "when he was come to the top (of the mount), where he worshipped God" (2 Sam. xv. 32.); which seems to imply, that here was an accustomed "high place" of that monarch where he used to offer up his prayers. His practice of worshipping on the tops of mountains seems to have been followed both in the idolatrous and lawful worship of this country. We can understand the selection of the summits of Moriah and Gerizim as sites for temples; and, I suppose, if the worship of Baal and the sun were identical, the high places of idolatry were considered

The conformation of the mountain with respect to Bethany is worthy of an observation; this is seen best from the hills to the south of the Hill of Evil Counsel, and to the east of the road to Bethlehem, as it crosses the plain of Rephaim. Thence it appears to have three ridges; the one towards Jerusalem, the most lofty; and Bethany lies to the north of the third or lowest, in a little valley, through which runs the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. Notwithstanding the variety of elevations from the point I have just mentioned, the mountain looks one great and connected whole, and if Olivet had its name from being well covered with wood both on the eastern and western sides, it would make the connection between one part of it and another much stronger. Of course this is only conjectural, though we gather something of this kind from the fact of the multitudes cutting down palm branches from the trees, on the occasion of our Lord's triumphal entry (Matt. xxi. 8. John, xii. 13.) over this mountain, for no tree of this kind appears now. The notion of an eastern garden too, (which Gethsemane is said to have

more accessible to their deity. The site of Baalbec or Heliopolis was possibly selected from the fact of a vast building already existing there, for it is in a valley.

been,) is altogether dependent upon trees, of which indeed the gardens of Damascus are entirely composed; there is literally nothing else.* And, however well wooded this mountain may have been, the army of Titus, as Josephus tells us particularly, cut down "all the trees that were about the city" for the making of banks against it, so that materials for fresh banks were "hard to be come at."† Very little, if any, of the ancient church of Helena, remains in the ruined mosque, with its broken minaret, at the summit of Olivet, though fragments of porphyry, fresco, and tesseræ, seem to hint at its former existence. From several points about it, the view both of Jerusalem, and the eastern country of the Dead Sea, and the mountains of Moab, is one of the finest in Palestine. From the gentle rise of the declivity on which Jerusalem is built, towards that part of the city furthest from the Mount of Olives, the

* Solomon's gardens, which were in the valley below Siloam (as Mr. Williams has ably shown), had many trees of all kinds of fruits. And "the sycamore trees" are incidentally said to have been "*in the vale* (doubtless the king's vale, as it is spoken of as though well known) in abundance" (1 Kings, x. 27.). And if the Kedron was then an open watercourse, as has been suggested, these trees would certainly continue all up the valley.

† Josephus, Wars, book v. c. xiii. s. 4.

whole city is placed in a map-like way before your eyes, the court of the mosque of Omar, with its domes, minarets, and cypresses, occupying a prominent part in the foreground of the picture. On the other side, the mountains of Moab give effect to the dreary aspect of that wilderness view by their blueness, caused not by distance, as in our northern country, but by the veil of evaporation continually rising from the surface of that deep and mysterious lake. If we descend the eastern side of the mountain by the road which leads to the south of the few huts which form an Arab village at the top, and gradually pass by the second mound or summit, the ground becomes, on the east of this point, more cultivated, and planted with apricots, mulberries, olives, pomegranates, and figs (the last reminding us that hereabouts it was that Christ withered with a word the barren tree); then suddenly it falls, and in a valley (umbrageous for Palestine) we find a ruined village, with screaming children and perpetually barking dogs, and this is Bethany, the town of Lazarus and his sisters — that family so loved by Jesus. In a hill to the north and north-east of the village, I saw four or five caverns which might have been used for burial, and these commended themselves more to me in reason and in association (apart

as they were from silly legends), than the deep cavern, with a long flight of steps, in the floor of which a grave was hewn, and which was designated by the Arab show-woman, the tomb of Lazarus.* The village itself is now called Lazarieh (as I heard distinctly from four different Arabs), and the Moslems have made a saint of him who was restored to life, and have built a small mosque in his honour. Some shapeless ruins of no particular age or style (a very common sort of ruin in Palestine), are supposed to be the remains of a church built here by Melisinda, a queen of Jerusalem, in the twelfth century, and since converted into a mosque and a stable successively. If the sight of those poor hovels, evidently rebuilt from the fragments of an old place, does not convince you that Lazarieh has nothing of old Bethany but its site, and a few of its stones, you may of course find (on a proper application to your guide), the houses of Simon the leper, and of Martha, and Mary, which you may have the privilege of examining (under consent of your nose) for a very moderate consideration.† Ah! it is as bad as a

* It cannot well be the genuine tomb, as it is in the village, and on the wrong part of it for the scripture narrative.

† "They go so far as to show a great stone to some, as the

curse on the land, this inventing of Bible scenes; as its very barrenness: it angers reason till she almost (being duped and mocked so often) refuses to believe any thing identified with place; it forces the Christian into constant argument, the educated man of the world into infidelity, and the ignorant into a blind superstition, which leads at last to the senseless declaration "Credo quia impossibile." From Bethany, one feature of the landscape struck me, and this was the beautiful effect of the mountain of Moab over the Dead Sea, and the valley of the Jordan, blue from the cause I have already named; and I could not but reflect that, as the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah, and of Lot's wife, had so often formed an illustration to the Redeemer's discourses, this view of the scene where those transactions were enacted (ever before his eyes when walking to Bethany) may have suggested them as meet examples of God's punishment of sin, and the fatal effects of looking backward in the pursuit of duty. Although I many times passed on the paths from Jerusalem to Bethany, and twice encircled the Mount of Olives, and

ass on which our Lord sat when he entered Jerusalem, converted miraculously into stone; but I was not so favoured." —*Lowthion's Tour in Palestine*, p. 73.

went as far to the eastward of the road as the nature of the ground would permit, yet I never saw any traces of other ruins which could give even a colour to the existence, in former times, of a village. The position of Bethphage, therefore, if it were a distinct place, is rather puzzling. There are a few traces of building, and a single column immediately above the present Lazarieh, seemingly a continuation for a short distance of the ancient Bethany. But it is possible that one part of Lazarieh may have been sufficiently distinct from the other to have made two small villages such as the Scripture mentions. It generally took me three quarters of an hour, and sometimes more, to reach on horseback the modern village from the Damascus Gate.

CHAP. XII.

TOMBS.

THE tombs in the valley of Jehoshaphat over against Mount Moriah have been already alluded to; but I must not omit to mention several sepulchral caverns in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, which I met with during my numerous rides about that highly interesting vicinage. First, in celebrity as in beauty, is undoubtedly that collection of chambers, just eastward of the road to Damascus, and called commonly "The Tombs of the Kings." Robinson has proved plainly* that this is the tomb of Helena, Queen

* Mr. Williams objects to this, that the pillars or pyramids and the remarkable dome are here no longer, and that there are too many tombs in it for Helena. As the monuments of the Fuller, of Ananias, of Absalom, and of Rachel are destroyed or invisible, the pyramids might well vanish also. Pausanias' account of the door seems to me to seal its absurdity; and we need more information before we can assert that Helena made the tomb only for her own body. And it is not quite fair to refer the plural of Josephus to the pyramids, and the singular of Pausanias to the chambers.

of Adiabene*; and as Josephus has given us data by which we learn that this Helena died not long after the famine at Jerusalem†, which came to pass in the reign of Claudius Cæsar (about A.D. 45), we arrive at the knowledge of the style of tomb building in the time of Claudius or Nero. Three pyramids, pillars, or cippi‡, ornamented this sepulchre, but of these no trace remains. They were probably much like the upper parts of the two outward tombs in the valley of Jehoshaphat, and the resemblance between the carving of the eastern doorway of Helena's tomb, and that of those in the valley, is very striking, although the workmanship of the former is apparently superior. A low door, in a sort of open portico cut in the solid rock, leads you into a succession of dark chambers where a light is needful; out of these are again small cells for the reception of a body in each.

If Helena shared the tomb with her son by accident, how could it have accommodated him if she had made it only a single excavation; and if it were enlarged for him, is it not likely that at the same time room would be made for such of his forty-eight children (Josephus, Wars, xx. v. 3.) as should wish to lie in the sepulchre of their father and grandmother?

* Robinson, vol. i. p. 534.

† Josephus, Antiquit. xx. c. ii. s. 1., and c. iv. s. 3.

‡ Acts, xi. 28.

There are no bones or traces of them. The doors whose stone hinges have excited the admiration of centuries, from Pausanias downwards to Mandrell, are broken down and trodden under foot; and the lid of a sarcophagus is the only thing which detains or interests the explorer in these natural caverns. But the beauty of these is very great, and it is a pity that it is permitted to be among rubbish, subjected to the injuries of weather, time, and travellers. It is divided into longitudinal strips, each filled with some small pattern, elaborately designed, having a tree or flower, or fruit of the country for its theme. The vine, the olive, the oak, and the pomegranate, are all perceptible, and I could not but recall the occurrence of the latter as an ornament in the Jewish temple in connection with a chain work* when I found them both here side by side, the chain-work forming the line between two different strips.†

* 1 Kings, vii. 17, 18.

† Each cell has a sunken channel running lengthways along the centre of the floor, and a small chamber at the further extremity. The first is, I suppose, to keep the body dry, and thus preserve it the longer; and perhaps the other may be to aid the same purpose. An English architect, I was told, has lately been excavating, but without making any discoveries. There is another ruined tomb, of similar

On the southern declivity of Olivet, not far from the summit, a hole in the earth admits you to a subterranean gallery, surrounded with cells for the dead. There is no attempt at ornament, but the extent of this sepulchre or cemetery is considerable, and seems to show that this kind of entombment in the rock was of general usage. This is vulgarly known as the "Tomb of the Prophets," but there is no authority whatever for such a notion; it has not been long re-discovered, and it is likely that many others of a similar character may exist in the mountains about Jerusalem.*

The whole country, in fact, abounds with tombs cut out of the rock, especially the valley of the Kedron, after the junction of those of Hinnom and Jehoshaphat, the valley of Hinnom on the southern side, and the rocks and valleys to the north and north-west of Jerusalem. Most of these are without ornament: they consist generally of an oblong entrance chamber entered by a square-headed doorway, which, when ornament is applied, is generally the part most adorned. From this outer portico a low door (or doors)

character to this, but without ornament, somewhat to the east over the Kedron.

* A detailed account of this tomb may be found in Lord Nugent's "Lands Classical and Sacred," vol. ii.

conducts you to another large chamber, which is surrounded by cells, the doors or ends of which open into it.* Sometimes there are two rows of these, one on the level of the floor, and the other above, but the first arrangement is most usual. A low doorway opposite to the entrance in some leads to another room, and in others a descent is effected to a lower chamber and tier of cells, through a small doorway in the floor. As these sepulchres are all carved out of the solid stone, the steep sides of valleys are necessarily selected, as the perpendicular face of the rock gives opportunity for an entrance to be made, and where the surface naturally is only inclined in a greater or less degree, it is cut down perpendicularly, and a small platform left at right angles with this front of the intended tomb, as a better means of access, as in that ornamented one to the north of Jerusalem, called the "Tombs of the Judges," and in many others.

There is one sepulchre among the rocks which lie to the north-west of Jerusalem, which is ornamented with a pediment and Greek decorations over the entrance doorway, which has also

* In the catacombs of Rome, Malta, and Naples, the cells for bodies have their *sides* generally presented to the chamber or passage.

carvings of the same style over the small doorway leading into the interior chambers or cells. This is called sometimes, by the Jews, the tombs of the Sanhedrim, and sometimes the tombs of Rabbi Eliezer and his disciples. Among all these numbers of tombs, I never found any bones. The modern Jews bury entirely, as I am told, in simple graves, and not in cavernous sepulchres of a like character with those around Jerusalem. As I am on the subject of tombs, I may observe, that the Mohammedans seem to have adopted the custom of whitening and garnishing the sepulchres of their friends and relatives, in common with many other usages from the Jews; the whole of the west side of the Kedron, from the mosque of Omar down to the valley, some 300 paces from the north-east corner of the city, being covered with Moslem tombstones, showing this peculiarity, which may be seen in the great cemetery about the upper Pool of Gihon. This custom brings to mind our Saviour's comparison of the Pharisees of his day, with "whited sepulchres, which, indeed, appear beautiful outwardly, but are within full of dead men's bones, and all uncleanness." (Matt. xxiii. 27.)

Around the interior face of the walls of Jerusalem, a few feet below the level of the summit, is a causeway, accessible by broken steps at the

Damascus Gate, and at the other leading points. This is, on a mild day, when neither wind nor sun are too powerful, a very pleasant walk, and thence we see the wretchedness of the habitations of this once glorious city, and the great patches of ground unoccupied by buildings even within the walls, and poorly cultivated as gardens. Of course, unbelieving Nazarines are not permitted to approach, even on the wall, too near the sacred Haram esh Shereef; but still very beautiful views of it may be obtained, with the blue mountains of Moab for a back ground, from many points on the wall, particularly near the Damascus Gate. But I know no place whence the desolation of Jerusalem is more perceptible than this; the ruinous heaps, the squalid inhabitants, the dark and silent streets, all testify that the place which the Lord delighted to honour is undergoing the extremity of his wrath. Trodden under foot of the Gentiles, "the city doth sit solitary that was full of people, her ways mourn, all her gates are desolate, and from the daughter of Zion all her former beauty is departed. Jerusalem hath grievously sinned, therefore she is removed." (Lamentations, i.)

CHAP. XIII.

EXCURSION TO JERICHO, THE JORDAN, THE DEAD SEA, BETHLEHEM, ETC.

One of my first excursions out of Jerusalem was to Jericho, the Jordan, and the Dead Sea; two of my former companions, Mr. H. and Mr. S., joined me, and the morning of the 24th of April found us crossing the valley of the Kedron, with mules, tents, and provisions, bound on the expedition. We had arranged preliminaries with Sheikh Mahmoud, the head and representative of the tribe through whose territory we were to pass, by paying him a black-mail or tribute of 100 piastres each (about a sovereign), in return for which he was to give us an escort of his Arabs to defend us from the robbers of the land. The number of this force varied during our journey, sometimes about a dozen were with us, and sometimes only three; but we knew that the only robbers we had to fear were the tribe of which they were a part, and that while we had one man of them to identify us, there was no fear of the remainder attacking. The Bedouins who formed

the escort were truly remarkable specimens of the human family; rather below the middle size, and thin to leanness, the smooth moulding of their swarthy limbs hid in part the muscular force which is the characteristic of the race. By this I do not mean that extraordinary and temporary power of physical effort, by which men of strength bear for a while huge burdens or lift great weights, but a less showy quality of enduring the most wonderful amount of exercise in the burning sun and the scorching rocks of their desert father-land. There were Arabs in our escort who this day ran with ease for seven hours in the most trying heat, and then, after sitting talking over their watch-fires nearly, if not quite, all the night, accompanied us next day through the most terrible burning rocky desert for eleven hours, and all this with a gun slung across their shoulders, and some with even a powder horn and sword in addition. And these men, to my eye, bore no singular appearance of strength, except their spareness, their smoothly moulded limbs, delicate hands and feet, and a fiery brilliant eye. There was nothing Michael Angelesque (if I may venture to use such a term) or strained in the appearance of their muscles; all was subdued and latent, like a marble or bronze statue of ancient Greece or Rome.

We passed round the southern declivity of the Mount of Olives, and skirted to the east a rich little vale full of apricot, carob, fig, and olive trees, and passing through the village of Lazarieh (the Bethany of old), we descended the last ridge of the Mount of Olives into a desert valley, at the commencement of which was a little fountain, with a Saracenic building over it. This spring is called the fountain of the Apostles, and if the fact of these holy men having quenched their thirst at this source of living water be all that is meant by the name, it is appropriate enough; the water is so near to Bethany, and so much on the way from Jerusalem to Jericho, Jordan, and the wilderness of Judæa, that our Lord and his followers most probably often drank of it. At two hours and a half from Jerusalem we lunched in a low cave, whose blackened roof showed it to have been often the resort of men; we then rode along a dry brook, where the transverse lines of volcanic strata were very evident. The sun was blazing away furiously all this while, without a breath of air. We now were fairly in the treeless barren wilderness of Judæa, where John the Baptist dwelt and taught repentance, and where our Lord himself was "led by the Spirit," before his great temptation by the prince of darkness. It is, I conclude, in a more deso-

late and ruined state than ever it was, even in the days of the Saviour's earthly sojourn; indeed, now it is impossible to picture any thing more dreary and sterile than this region is. Hilly, almost mountainous, passable chiefly in the close valleys which are shut out from the influence of the air of heaven, the white glare of chalky cliffs increasing the intensity of the heat, not a tree, not a shady place to relieve, or a stream to refresh the parched wanderer, the wilderness of Judæa is indeed fearful and cheerless. We passed at last up the side of a deep precipitous valley *, where the scene, which had long been monotonous from the tame outline of the round hills, became bold and grand, and formed a rocky pass of vast height on either side of a little dry watercourse. This, which the Arabs called "Wady Kelt," is considered by Dr. Robinson to be the brook Cherith, where Elijah retired at the command of Jehovah, and was miraculously fed by ravens. And it was a very remarkable coincidence that, while I gazed into this grand though barren defile, two ravens, each soaring apart, swept down between the jagged and precipitous

* In the dry bed of the stream of this valley I found a beautiful yellow orobanche; and Mr. S. caught a chamelion, which is not an uncommon reptile throughout the whole of Judæa.

rocks, and disappeared in the windings of the gorge, uttering at intervals their hoarse discordant croak. Hence we descended into the celebrated valley of "El Ghor," which now lay spread before us, with the Jordan marked out in all its windings by the fringe of dark vegetation on its banks, the nearer stream of the fountain of "Ain Sultan" also nourishing a rich luxurious jungle in its course; Jericho, or Riha, with its ruined tower; the mountains of Moab rising grandly like a wall from the opposite side of the valley, and the northern end of the Dead Sea, with its calm metallic looking waters. Just below us, almost in our road, stood a rude tumulus of earth, of whose origin and import no man knows, albeit it is clearly artificial.

We descend into that fine yet burning plain, cross the dry bed of the stream of Wady Kelt, and passing through a tract thick-set with bushes of the thorny nubk, whose sweet berries we often stopped to gather, we come upon a beautifully limpid gushing stream, which feeds on its further side rich groves of most lovely trees, and a rank jungle of reeds, and nubk, and shrubs, water and shade, in rich luxuriance. A little further on we find the source, the Ain Sultan itself, which bears the name among the Franks of "the foun-

tain of Elisha," and here we pitch our tents, where we can revel in the shade, and drink with ears, and eyes, and lips, of that sweet bubbling water, of which, at first, scorched and parched as we are by the pitiless heat of the desert sun, we feel that we can never have enough. But we must haste and drink, for all our Moslem Arabs are in the water, floundering, and splashing, and revelling in its coolness, and then they emerge, sink awhile upon their knees by the water's margin, and bow their heads upon the earth in worship, muttering in silence their Mohammedan ejaculations, or the religious exercise of "the Cow." * But this fervour was confined to a few of the elder members of our escort, while the others seemed to regard such services with latitudinarian indifference. The water of the fountain of Elisha is received into a large square basin, which is overshadowed by an umbrageous fig-tree; the liquid itself is pure and sweet † (if a hot and thirsty man's opinion is worth anything), and its proximity to the probable site of ancient Jericho, joined to the fact of its being the most conspicuous, if not the only

* A favourite chapter in the Koran so named.

† There were many small fish, exactly like a dace, and abundance of a large black *Melanopsis*.

fountain in this vicinity, gives a colour to the name which the Franks have given to it, on the ground of its representing the very spring whose waters Elisha so wonderfully sweetened. (2 Kings, ii. 19.)

While dinner was preparing, and after I had drank deep of the delicious stream, and enjoyed the dark shade of the fig-tree, I rambled with my gun into the jungle. It was so thick and tangled that I made my way with a difficulty which was increased by the prickly nature of all the brushwood, which was chiefly nûbk; yet the beauty of the flowers, the wildness of the vegetation, and the pleasant sensation of wandering alone in this seemingly untrodden waste, gave a charm to my walk which even the heat and obstacles could not take away. Here and there, among the tall cane brakes of reeds, I came upon the lair of some large wild beast; and once I thought the bushes rustled, and when I eagerly pushed aside the intervening branches in hopes to catch a glimpse of the retreating one, the newly-broken boughs and crushed herbage showed at least how recently the place had been the hold of some great animal. Of birds I saw but few, although, from the warbling chorus of the evening, there must have been many; yet I

watched the graceful movements of a little sunbird * sucking the sweetness from the flowers of a lilac vetch, which here grew very luxuriantly.

The plants and productions of the neighbourhood were certainly of a more tropical character than those of any other part of Palestine, which the low and hot position of this valley indeed seems to demand. The prickly lilac-flowering *Solanum Melongena* was plentiful about "Ain Sultán," whose apples, fair to the eye and most bitter to the taste, and often internally corroded by the puncture of a small circulio, are supposed by some to be the celebrated apples of Sodom of which the ancients spoke.† But Robinson and succeeding travellers give preference to the beautiful and curious *Asclepias gigantea*, which is found here, although sparingly (its chief locality being Ain Jidy) ‡; its clustered flowers of white and purple, with its large cinereous silky leaf, adorn the tropical countries of the East and West, while its round green seed pods, resembling some fair fruit, yet yielding only a white soft down, not unlike that of the thistle, have no

* Dr. M'Gowan speaks of a humming bird, but I did not see any. Turtle doves were common.

† Dr. M'Gowan on Jewish Intelligence.

‡ I have seen it in great splendour in the West Indian islands. It is common in Barbadoes and Jamaica.

doubt supported the claims of this plant as the veritable fruit which was conspicuous for tempting the eye and proving worthless to the taste. A small pink lychnis, and a great variety of vetches of divers shades of lilac and yellow, attracted many insects of the hymenopterous and dipterous orders; and beautiful dark-winged libellulæ came sailing over the reeds, their bright blue and green bodies shining in the sun like the metallic humming birds of tropical climes. The heat was intense; during the day my thermometer stood in the shade at 110° Fahr.; but this was during the time of a sirocco, or south wind, which, blowing over the scorching wilderness of Zin, and the pent-up valley of the Dead Sea, casts its terrible and debilitating influences over the whole valley of "El Ghor." At night the heat kept up to 96° until the approach of morning, when a cooler breeze arose. This heat was so stifling and oppressive, that I found it impossible to sleep, and so, after tossing about on my mattress, and making all sorts of endeavours to cheat myself into a slumber, I gave up the attempt in despair, and sallied forth, "en déshabillé," to chase the many fire-flies which were dancing in the air and over the brushwood like a number of erratic sparks. After capturing enough of these to satisfy me that they were

small beetles (and not orthopterous insects) *, carrying their light in their abdomen and thorax, I sauntered up the eminence which lay behind our tents and gazed into the starry night. Behind me were lofty mountains, whose highest peak is termed Quarantania, from a supposition that this was the mountain where our Lord was tempted after his forty days' fasting. Around me were the watchfires of two or three groups of Arabs, who sat crouching, and talking in a low and guttural manner, or listening to one telling some tale for the twentieth time, at which they would laugh just as though it were new. The dark jungle, reaching down almost to the Jordan itself, was at my feet, and the incessant crying of the jackals, the fiendish laugh of the hyænas, mingled with certain unknown and mysterious sounds, showed that the beasts of the forest were awake, and seeking their nightly prey. Sometimes these cries would come alarmingly near, then again they would die away for a

* They are very small beetles, like *Cirindelæ*, black and red, about a fourth part of an inch in length. The firefly of the West Indies is an elater, about an inch long, whose light is in his thorax. That of China and that of Brazil are two hemipterous (or orthopterous) insects, which carry their light in a proboscis; while the glowworm of England is the apterous female of a small beetle, the male of which has no light at all.

time, and the distant bark of dog from Jericho would again call forth the chorus of the midnight prowlers. We rose very early the next morning, ere it was light, and crossing the jungle by a beaten pathway, we arrived shortly at the ruined and miserable village of "Riha," which is generally taken to hold the position of ancient Jericho, although that city no doubt occupied a much larger space of ground than Riha does. An old falling tower was the only antique looking thing which the dull grey-light of morning permitted me to see, and I passed on anxiously expecting a first sight of the Jordan.* However, we had to traverse a considerable tract of barren flat, and then descend into a line of arid sand and dry mud hills, all very round and pyramidal in shape, and evidently showing that they had been so worn by the action of overflowing waters. Yet I could not hear of any one who had ever seen this part flooded, though the lack of vegetation and number of fresh water shells, and their condition, seemed at first sight to indicate a not very remote period for such an inundation. After crossing about half a mile of this very fantastic and mysterious looking country, while

* Not one palm tree remains in Jericho, the ancient city of palms.

I was admiring the beautiful song of the earliest lark, I heard the rush and saw the bright glitter of waters, the dark overhanging trees and waving tamarisk-bushes opened in a friendly gap, and showed between the rapid flowing stream of the Jordan.

The place where we had arrived was that particular part of the river chosen by the Greek church as the site of our Lord's baptism, and, though my confidence in the traditional evidence which connects places with events in the holy land was not strong enough to enable me to give credence to the exact spot as the scene of that remarkable ceremony, still the legend reminded me, that in these waters of this very Jordan our Redeemer had submitted to the rite of baptism, and hallowed it to us by so doing.

The waters go rapidly, as I have said. Mr. S., who bathed, found the current very strong, and the depth, after a few steps, considerable; at first I thought it narrow, but on throwing a stone across I found that in this respect my eyes had been deceived, and I fancied Châteaubriand's estimate of fifty paces was nearly a correct one. The stream was very muddy, and underneath the stones with which the bed of the river was lined at this point (where there is a slight curve) are many shells of Melania,

Melanopsis, and Neritina, specimens of which, whitened by the sun's rays, I found on all the adjacent plain, whereon the waters seem at times to have overflowed. The stream of the Jordan runs in general somewhat inaccessibly between two high banks of sandy mud, thickly covered with shrubs and trees, amongst which two or three species of poplar, the tamarisk, and lofty reeds (*Arundo Donax*) seemed to figure conspicuously. The course of the river, from the Sea of Galilee to the Bahr Lout, or Dead Sea, has been lately well explored by a scientific American expedition, with the members of which I had the pleasure and good fortune to meet. The record of their course will doubtless soon be laid before the public, and will furnish us with many interesting facts; they found the river, in consequence of its numerous windings, much longer than is generally given in the maps, and of the most intricate and difficult navigation, even with small boats, owing to the constant occurrence of rapids, cataracts, and shallows. The cane brakes and jungle on either side of the water were found abounding with wild boars, gazelles, and jackals, and the ruins of ancient bridges were discovered, which may tend to throw light on the old roads of the country, by their position and character. The details of such a

journey cannot fail to be highly interesting, and will probably make the world again a great debtor to American inquiry and zeal. Having filled our bottles with water from the Jordan (the pilgrims who come down in crowds here generally cut a staff on the banks), we remounted, and pursuing for a short distance the tortuous bank of the river, we struck off a little westward to the northern extremity of the Dead Sea. I was much struck in this now desolate valley (once fertile as the garden of the Lord) with the deceptive effect of the waters of the distant sea, which, although they seemed not a hundred paces from us, took us more than an hour to reach. The scene which the Dead Sea presents to a traveller from the north end, is one which seems to justify all the ideas which historians and voyagers in ancient times of ignorance entertained of it. A thick still water, which returns to the sun's rays a blueness and brilliancy which seem at this level almost metallic, and rocks rising with precipitous grandeur almost from the lake itself; no waving foliage to refresh the eye, no verdant flowers to deck the margin, dead naked trees carried down by the stream of Jordan and stranded in the high swelling of the winter tide; two or three naked Arabs gathering salt from the incrusted swamps, and a blue mist

rising so thickly from the surface of the water as to prevent me from seeing more than about a mile distinctly, such appearances were calculated to engender sentiments of dread and superstitious horror. And when to this is added the tremendous catastrophe of God's vengeance on the cities of the plain, the record whereof was emblazoned in the chronicles of the children of Abraham, and lives in the present name of "the Sea of Lot" (Bahr Lout), by which the Arabs know it, we can scarcely be surprised that, in their mysterious fear, they should add new and unreal terrors to those which do actually exist.

The water is so intensely salt and bitter that it is almost impossible to swallow even a small portion of it.* Fish cannot live in it, and vegetation withers (with very few exceptions) at the touch of it†; and the wonderful mist which shows the great and rapid evaporation constantly going on, suggested perhaps the notion of sul-

* Dr. Marcet's well-known analysis gives about one-fourth of its weight of salts.

† The many little shells which are found around the waters are those of land Helices, and a few dead whitened fresh-water specimens of Melania, from the valley of Jordan, or that river itself. There are certainly no living mollusks whatever visible in the water of the sea.

phuric and deadly vapours on the surface, which do not generally exist.*

Swallows were flying about over the water, and a large duck shaped its course over the very centre of the lake, and disappeared in the veil of mist. After we had lunched, seated on a large promontory, composed of pebbles and great loose stones, Mr. H. bathed and found the water as buoyant as it has been always reported, making it difficult to swim; the saltness was extremely painful to his eyes and skin, and after some time a rather greasy crystallization of the salts contained in the water was perceptible wherever the skin had not been completely dried. There was a good deal of the black bituminous stone from which the little crosses and fancy wares are made at Jerusalem, scattered about this northern end of the lake, and I also found small masses of a softer mineral,

* Perhaps the expression of Moses (Deut. xxix. 23.), "The whole land thereof is brimstone and salt," may have tended also, supported as it is by the undoubted existence of masses of sulphur, bitumen, and nitre in the adjacent rocks, to create this idea; or it is even possible that, in a highly electrical state of the atmosphere, these minerals may cause fetid exhalations. (Vide Irly and Mangles, p. 453.) The American expedition were more than a month (in April and May) upon the surface of the lake, and lived and slept frequently in their boats; yet they enjoyed excellent health, and experienced no noxious vapours whatever.

which was undoubtedly asphalt, and in some places where it had been exposed to the sun had melted like pitch. About thirty yards from the water grew a few wretched stumpy shrubs, chiefly diminutive yew trees, and a small shrub with leaves like the broom, and long spiral bunches of shining little white berries, and I even saw a swallow-tail butterfly (*Papilio Machaon*) hovering about these brown and stunted apologies for vegetation. The heat was intense, and the lack of air in this deep pent-up valley rendered it almost insupportable.

The extreme length of the Dead Sea is about fifty miles, and its average breadth about ten: the map which Dr. Robinson constructed has been found to be substantially correct in its bearings and dimensions.* There are several streams of fresh water flowing into the Sea, both on the eastern and western sides; and a remarkable peculiarity has been discovered in the sandy

* In the following remarks, I follow a series of notes which I collected from various English and American travellers who had traversed more or less of the borders of this Sea. Chiefly, however, am I indebted to the gentlemen of the American expedition, whose courtesy and kindness in imparting information I shall always remember with gratitude. I trust ere long the full particulars of their most interesting expedition will be published.

shore, near to "Ain Terabah," a stream which has at its *embouchure* the most pleasant dell of verdure which is to be found around the whole Sea. On scooping out a hole, of little more than a foot and a half in depth, in the sand, a supply of fresh and tolerably good water is quickly obtained, and this phenomenon (as I understand) continues to appear to within two or three yards of the very waters of the great Salt Lake. The level of the Dead Sea has been ascertained to be about 1200 feet below that of the Mediterranean; and I was credibly informed that soundings have been taken in the Sea itself at the depth of 1200 feet. If this be true, we have here one of the most remarkable natural depressions in the earth's surface for abruptness and depth, occupying a site of one of the most remarkable ancient convulsions of which we have any record. At that part of the Sea which abuts upon the rock called Usdone (a word considered by Robinson to be the Arabic form of Sodom), and all along the south end, the water is generally so shallow that the shore is sometimes approached with difficulty in a boat nearer than a quarter of a mile. The remarkable pillar, or isolated rock of chalk and salt, observed by former travellers near Usdone, and called by the Arabs "the Wife of Lot," still

remains, and measures about 120 feet in height. While taking soundings in the northern parts of the Sea, small cubic crystals of salts adhered to the lead; these were isolated and detached, and were found to lie in great numbers at the bottom of the water, on a slimy mud. In the sterile and dusty region around the shores, the snakes, doves, partridges, and insects (among which are many scorpions), are observed to assume the dusty, light sandy colour which is a characteristic feature of the whole landscape, a truly notable circumstance in natural history, although somewhat analogous to the whiteness which certain birds and animals put on in the regions of snow.

Violent squalls, sudden in their commencement and end, are not infrequent. On the south-eastern side, the place marked as Zoar in the maps is said to be very fertile; but no ruins of any importance are discernible. To the south, the fort of Kerak is still sufficiently strong as to need very few repairs to make it a most important military retreat, although after Ibrahim Pasha had taken it, he left in it a French engineer, with express commands to destroy the fortifications. Nevertheless its strength, both by position and artificially, is great enough to excite the admiration of travellers. A tribe of

Arab Christians has been found in Kerak. They are of the Greek church, and so very poor that they are supported almost entirely by the building of a church, which is in process of erection by the Greek convent in Jerusalem. The ruins of the ancient city of Masada (built by Herod the Great), to the west of the Dead Sea, are placed upon a mountain so inaccessible, that they have been unvisited by travellers until recently. Although no columns yet stand, there are considerable ruins, and even mosaics, of the Roman era; and the caverns and cisterns are such as to excite wonder at their extent. Some underground cells betray, by the marks of the red cross in them, that these ruins were not unknown to the eremites or crusaders.* The view of the Dead Sea from this position is said to be very magnificent.

On leaving the shore of the Dead Sea (to return to our journey), we traversed a hilly desert without shelter or relief, exposed to the heat and glare of the sun's rays. It was seven hours and a half ere we arrived at the monastery of St. Saba, exhausted and parched with thirst.

* The wilderness of Ain Jidy (Engeddi) has many cavernous cells and cloisters in the rocks and cliffs, and has been always remarkable as a retreat for those who wished to shun the society of men.

We had this day in our escort a black, who carried a huge sword. He killed with his great weapon a little ringed adder while in the desert, with many cries and gesticulations. On inquiry, I found that he had been originally a Nubian slave, purchased by the Sheikh of the tribe who were escorting us, and afterwards enfranchised. The line between slavery and freedom among these nomadic races must be a very narrow one, for the Sheikh's power of life and death does not appear to be confined to slaves, but extends to all the members of his tribe. We passed large herds of camels, with their young, grazing on the scarcely perceptible tufts of dried-up plants, and obtained a fine view of the Dead Sea in ascending several of the hills. The monastery of St. Saba is situated in the valley of the brook Kedron, which is here a deep gorge, the rocks on either side frequently overhanging, and giving considerable grandeur to the scene. The road to the building is cut for some distance in the rock. The place itself is strongly walled and fortified, having so often suffered from attacks by Arabs; but, with the exception of great hospitality, good water and coffee from the inmates, it is not worth a visit, as it does not show any trace of its ancient foundation, either in archi-

tecture, paintings, or ecclesiastical treasures*; being, in fact, nothing more than a very comfortable inn in the wilderness, with a very tawdry modern chapel.† We spent the night at Mar Suba (as it is called), and next morning, ascending the mountains and taking a south-westerly course, we crossed about two hours of wilderness, and then, gaining a sight of Jerusalem, which here appears on an elevation, we entered the plains of Bethlehem. It was early in the morning, yet there were shepherds abiding in the fields who had been keeping watch over their flocks by night, and the black tents of the Bedouin were clustered on the side of a hill, while their sheep and goats depastured round them. Every shepherd lad seemed here to possess an interest, and to represent to us the youthful David as he kept his father's sheep on these plains, and, fearless, slew the lion and bear who came to rob the flock; every reaper and gleaner

* I speak, of course, only of those things which are shown to the public. There may be private things of this nature in the possession of the institution.

† Here Yussuf shot a bird, which he called a bulbub. Its song was like that of a blackbird, which it somewhat resembled in form and size. Its bill was like that of a jackdaw; its colour black, with dark umber pinions to the wings.

in the valley (now white for the harvest) reminded us of Ruth and Boaz, and his reapers; every shepherd man demanded our attention; for were not Bethlehem's shepherds first selected by Almighty wisdom to hear the tidings of a Saviour's birth? As I passed along the valley leading up to Bethlehem, fertile with olive-yards and vineyards yet*, I could not help reflecting on the present state of the Christian world (as we term it), convulsed with war and hatred towards each other. What a contrast did it present to the glorious vision of the poor Bethlehemite shepherds; what a contempt of that celestial anthem of the angelic choir, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men!"

Around Bethlehem, the towers for watching and preserving the vines and fruit, alluded to by our Lord in the parable of the husbandman (Matt. xxi. 33.; Isa. v. 2.), are to be seen in numbers, and give an agreeable variety to the stony hills. The convent of the Nativity is some three hundred yards from the village, and has at its entrance the finest Basilica I saw in Palestine.

* Bethlehem, in Hebrew, signifies "house of bread;" "Beit Lahm," in Arabic (its present name), "house of meat," both meaning a place of fertility and abundance.

It is probably the one built by Helena, the mother of Constantine, or rather commenced by her, as recorded by Eusebius*, and finished by her imperial son, and is, I fancy, almost the only authentic structure of that aged church-builder which exists in Palestine. It has double aisles, and the roof is supported by forty handsome columns of pink marble of the neighbourhood†, with Corinthian capitals of white marble; the centre pillars down the nave had figures of saints painted on them, but these are nearly obliterated. In the walls of the clerestory are the remains of ancient Byzantine mosaics, representing various Scripture scenes; and these are, I should imagine, some of the earliest Christian pictures of this material which exist. Passing through a screen, the visitor finds himself in the centre of a transept, whose walls are covered with absurd and frightful pictures of St. George and the Dragon, and various saintly fancy portraits, whose very names are obliterated from the generally strong memory of the custodi. In the centre is a richly gilded screen of the Greek church, with much carved oakwork, the only part of this enclosure

* Euseb. Vit. Const. iii. 42, 43.

† The stone of anointing in the church of the Sepulchre is of this marble.

which possesses the faintest claims to beauty. The curious mosaics are continued around this clerestory. The grotto of the Nativity is under the altar and screen of the Greeks: you go down so many steps, that I could not but wonder how the ancients ever converted this subterranean cavern into a stable, inasmuch as the cows and horses and asses of modern times would descend with very great difficulty, and find but little room when they got down.* A dark chamber lined with figured satin, a marble manger and floors, pictures, a great many lamps (but not much light), a good deal of trashy fringe, artificial flowers, and the tawdry "ensemble" of a raree-show: this was all that I could see of the grotto of the Nativity. A star in a recess, with the inscription "Hic de Virgine Mariâ Jesus Christus natus est," bids you regard that spot

* It is quite true that caverns are used in Palestine for all sorts of things; but this only substantiates the possibility of the site, which seems again counterbalanced by the subterranean character of the cave, and its awkwardness of access. Moreover, the men of Eusebius' day seem to have had a most singular love for caverns; and he himself seems to doubt whether any great event in Christianity would have taken place without them. He tries very much to drag a cave into the history of the ascension. (Eusebius, Constant. iii. 42, 43.) They are thus far always, *primâ facie*, suspicious.

as the very locality of the birth of our Redeemer as a man. If the evidences in favour of the authenticity of this site were unexceptionable, the effect of a place neither left in its natural simplicity, nor even decorated with taste and beauty, would render it very difficult to realise the fact, or to summon those deep and solemn reflections which the apprehension of the event of the Nativity of God's incarnate Son ought to engender in the heart of every grateful Christian. This, and this only, can be the gratification which a spiritual religion admits, when we tread the ground which the Saviour trod, or view the places of his sojourning: to us these marble floors cannot appeal; yon gilded star but mocks the lofty worship of the faithful. Leave we, then, these prostrate Greeks and groaning women to do lip-service to the marble manger, to the place where the infant was bound in swaddling-clothes, and to the place over which the eastern star came and stood: let us away, for time wears on, and the gates of Jerusalem are shut at sun-set. The people of Bethlehem are notoriously the most industrious community, at least in this part of Palestine. They employ a large portion of their time in the manufactory of beads, crosses, and engraved shells from the bitumen stone of the Dead Sea, the olives and olive wood of the

neighbourhood, and the pearly shell of a large Meleagrina, which is brought from the Red Sea for this purpose. Some of their incised shells show considerable skill and taste; and the ready sale of all these articles to the pilgrims supplies a wholesome stimulus to the industry of the Bethlehemites, who are in consequence numbered amongst the most respectable inhabitants of Palestine. At the eastern entrance of the city of David is an ancient well, which tradition or fancy has asserted to be the very spring whence the three mighty men drew water to satisfy the longing of their king, when David was in a hold (in the cave of Adullam), and the troop of the Philistines were encamped in the valley of Rephaim, and their garrison held Bethlehem itself (2 Sam. xxiii. 13. 17.). I do not see any impossibility in this idea. The well is said to have been "by the gate:" it was probably on the same side of Bethlehem as David himself (inasmuch as the Philistines were encamped at Rephaim, on the opposite side to Adullam), and it was so near to the gate of Bethlehem as to be included in the lines of defence, for the champions brake through the host of the Philistines. This well is commonly resorted to for water by the women of Bethlehem, whose costume, bearing, and personal appearance, though highly

prepossessing, struck me as inferior to those of the women of Nazareth. The men and women of this place have the reputation of being excellent shots; and a handsome young man brought down for me with a bullet a specimen of the *Merops apiaster*, which flies as fast as a swallow, and is about the size of a snipe.

Leaving the town of Bethlehem (which lies clustered on the crest of a hill), we passed, in about half an hour, a little to the left, the tomb of Rachel, lately rebuilt by Sir Moses Montefiore like a Moslem wely. Although it has no intrinsic attraction, yet its position agrees well with that of the pillar of Rachel's grave; and as it is isolated from any other buildings, and by the side of a public road, its locality may very easily have been preserved. The Jews have the key of an interior apartment, where they go to worship on solemn and stated occasions.* A little further to the left, on the slope of a hill on the other side of a fertile valley, stands the village of Beit-Jalil, encircled and set off by a rich grove of dark olives, making this part of the scene the most rich in appearance of any spot in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem. In another half-hour

* On the news of the convulsions in Poland, numbers of the Polish Jews went to offer up prayers here.

we came opposite to the Greek convent of Mar Elias, whence the first view of Jerusalem is obtained, which, although rather too much hidden by the wall, and spoilt in its outline by the hills beyond, is yet a picturesque and noble object. In another hour we had crossed the plain of Rephaim, which lay before us, passed down one side of the valley of Hinnom and up the other, and found ourselves once more at Jerusalem, entering by the Jaffa, or Bethlehem gate, with the bluff tower of Hippicus on our right hand, and the English church greeting us pleasantly in front.

CHAP. XIV.

EXCURSION TO SOLOMON'S POOLS AND HEBRON, ETC.

On Friday the 12th of May, as Mr. Nicolayson and Mr. Sinyanki (both missionaries of the Jewish Society) were going to pay their visit to Hebron, my friend Mr. Margoliouth, Mr. Schwartz (a student at the late Hebrew college at Jerusalem), and I accompanied them.

Issuing at the Jaffa gate, we crossed the valley of Hinnom by the raised pathway at the head of the great reservoir called the Lower Pool of Gihon, and, ascending the opposite hill, entered upon the plain of Rephaim. We leave somewhat to the left the Hill of Evil Counsel, as it is termed, on the top of which are a few ruined walls without any character, and a solitary tree of the fir tribe, blown on one side by the influence of constant breezes: your guide will tell you that the ruins are all that remains of the country-house of Caiaphas, and the tree is that identical one upon which Judas hanged himself.*

* It is remarkable that at one season of the year the traitor Judas has here a festival, whereat large numbers of

We pursued the road to Bethlehem, past Mar Elias, till we came near the tomb of Rachel, when we turned off to the right into a stony valley, where, after riding about half an hour, we came suddenly upon the pools of Solomon. These are three large oblong tanks, formed in the fall of a valley, one above the level of the other in succession, the water being stopped, as it were, by a wall and embankment running across the valley and forming the lower end of each of these reservoirs. I rode round them and examined them, but could discern nothing in the building of the tanks themselves which would point to a Jewish origin. Plain plastered walls at the sides, stone steps down into the reservoirs, and three or four buttresses in the topmost one, are all the architectural features of these pools. And these buttresses, on examination, appeared to me so evidently Saracenic, that I think they must have been inserted at the time when the Saracenic fort (now ruined) was built; particularly as they are confined to that part of the wall of the pools which might be expected to yield to the additional pressure of a large new

the eastern Christians assemble; and they have sainted him, notwithstanding the statements of Scripture. The sword of the Spirit pares down much of the mass of eastern hagiology.

building near to it. And I think it most in accordance with the general appearance of these reservoirs to believe, that about the same era the whole of the walls and masonry underwent at least a complete repair. Nevertheless, as the gardens and trees which are below these pools, and nourished by their waters, still bear the name of Etan *, there is every reason to believe that the site is the very one in which Solomon "made him pools of water to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees" (Ecclesiastes, ii. 6.), and that the gardens are the very "Etham" to which the wisest of kings was wont to resort. † We crossed several hills and valleys thickly clothed with brushwood, lilac, and white cistus, daphne, dwarf oak, and even a few stunted fir-trees. ‡ We lunched near a ruined khan, or village, called Beit Haran, where there was a fine stream of water, and traversing a very rocky hill

* Lord Lindsay.

† Josephus, Antiq. viii. c. vii. s. 3. There is also, perhaps, an allusion to the river which once supplied the gardens in the Septuagint version of the Psalms. (Ps. lxxiv. 15.) "Σὺ ἐξήρανας ποταμοὺς ἠθάμ."

‡ I was much struck by the immense number of ants in this neighbourhood, their long columns carrying food for the winter to their nests, crossing the pathway at every step. I could not but remember Solomon's advice: "Go to the ant, thou sluggard: consider her ways, and be wise," &c.

country, where the ruins of many villages were perceptible, we descended into the fertile valley of Eschol, full of the finest vineyards I had ever seen in Palestine. The grapes were now quite green, but were very large and abundant. In about six hours and a half after leaving Jerusalem, we entered the ancient city of Hebron, or Kirjath-arba, picturesquely seated in a fertile vale, or rather on the slopes of four hills which take their rise in the valley. Yet though the inhabitants are numerous*, and the adjacent country so fertile, the houses, bazaars, streets, and condition of the people of Hebron seemed to me very wretched and mean. Our foolish dragoman had pitched our tents, before our arrival, on a piece of ground belonging to the tomb of some deceased worthy of Moslem hagiology, close by a great tank, not unlike one of the pools of Solomon. This coming on the morrow to the ears of the cadi, that functionary politely informed us that we were offending the prejudices of devout Moslems, and requested us to accommodate ourselves elsewhere. On the Saturday evening, therefore, we removed to an olive enclosure on the hill to the south of the city. The

* The Scottish mission speaks of them as under ten thousand (p. 184.).

chief antiquity of Hebron no Christian or Jew is allowed to inspect: this is the "Haram," or great mosque, a large oblong building enclosed with high walls, having two minarets at the opposite corners. The masonry of the lower part of the wall is certainly (as Mr. Bartlett has remarked *) very similar to that of the temple-wall at Jerusalem, near the Jews' place of wailing: here, however, a sort of pilaster is repeated along the face of the wall, which produces a good effect. The Mohammedans declare that this enclosure contains the cave of Machpelah, the burying-place of the father of the faithful and his wife.

There is also a pool at the north end of the main division of the city, which is said to be the identical one over which David hung the limbs of the assassins of his rival Ishbosheth, the son of Saul (2 Sam. iv. 12.). It appeared like an ancient reservoir, and was partly filled with water; whereas the other larger one near our encampment had the appearance of a much more modern structure. We visited during our stay here a cavern in the vale of Mamre, which is called the tomb of Othniel, where are nine cells and a central entrance to other chambers, now inaccessible. Our Jewish guide also took us to a

* Walks about Jerusalem, Appendix, p. 219.

ruined building which he called the cave of Jesse, where a dark hole in the ground is shown, which the Jews assert communicates with the cave of Machpelah which is on the other side of the valley, a fact which I could not but think very unlikely, although our informant assured us, in confirmation of his story, that an inquisitive fowl which had been put in at this end had come out in the cave of Abraham.

Hebron is one of the four holy cities of the Jews, and, as the abode and sepulchre of the patriarchs, has great claims on their religious affections. Accordingly, we found them here in considerable numbers, and chiefly of the strictest sect of their religion, the "Chasidim," to whose strange conduct during their services I have already alluded. The Jewish quarter is situated in the middle of the chief division of Hebron, and is approached from the main street by a single doorway, which leads into a labyrinth of narrow tortuous passages, about which the children of Abraham have their lowly dwellings. They are said to number rather more than a hundred families, that is, about forty of the Sephardim and from sixty to seventy of the Chasidim. I saw several women among them of extraordinary beauty, the most delicate complexion and classic features being set off by, and contrasted with, large

lustrous black eyes, and agreeing well with the graceful semicircular turban, which, with the loose folds of the dress and lofty carriage, gave each Jewess the dignity, grandeur, and modest aspect of an Esther. On Saturday the 13th, being the Jewish sabbath, we all attended the services of the two synagogues. First we went to that of the Sephardim, where the service began about seven o'clock in the morning, and waited till after the reading of the Law. There was nothing disorderly in the behaviour of these men, and their oriental dress and talith made them a very fine and interesting group. And when, at one period in their service, they all rose and sang in solemn unison the song of triumph over the drowned Egyptians in the Red Sea, the stern aspect, ancient dress, and flashing eyes of these children of Israel, votaries of the old Mosaic dispensation in its literal rigour, and the sensation that, after so many ages of wanderings, glories, captivities, and persecutions, the sons of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob yet came and dwelt on past exaltation, and hoped for future empire, here in the very house and sepulchre of their fathers, all this brought to my mind the great reality of Bible history, and seemed to display a link of that mysterious chain which binds the present to the past, the lower steps of a dreamy

ladder, the top whereof reacheth to heaven. We went on to the Polish synagogue, where we found the fantastical Chasidim going through their mad antics, shouting, screaming, clapping their hands, knocking and squeaking in the most frantic manner. I have already described the conduct of the service which we saw this morning; so I pass on to the interview which we had with the chief rabbi or Cacham. He was an old man of not very striking features, but with a long grey beard, which he took occasion frequently to stroke. His wife ushered us into his apartment, where he was seated on a divan, and where we were soon motioned to seat ourselves near him; she then stood below the upper division of the apartment, and, after serving us with sweetmeats, listened in modest attention to the conversation.*

Mr. Margoliouth soon found out a topic for controversy in the words of David, from the 110th Psalm, already used by our Redeemer for that purpose, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy foot-stool. If David in spirit call him

* This lady, before we left, declared that I was a Polish Jew, and a convert to Christianity of only six months' standing; and the young Jews came around me as we left, and besought me, in Spanish, Hebrew, and Polish, to acknowledge my nation, and declare why I had apostatised.

Lord, how is he his son ?" To answer this difficulty, the old man got out a little book written by some Jewish controversialist on such subjects, and tried to prove that the psalm was written by some friend of David, and was applicable to that monarch himself. As he had admitted (before looking at this book) that it was applied to Messiah, the rabbi did not come ont very well in this affair. Meanwhile his little son, about twelve years of age, hearing the Epicursim (as they call Christians) attack the principles of his father's religion, suddenly took a most violent part in the discussion, shouting and exclaiming loudly against Christians and Christianity, rating us all in no measured terms as apostates, "meshumadim," infidels, and such like, and raised such a din with his shrill voice (of course he did not argue, but only railed), that he fairly brought the discussion to a full stop. I hope I do not belie the old Cacham, but I fancied, as he every now and then attempted to impose silence on his insubordinate offspring, a gleam of satisfaction came over his countenance at the young zealot's pertinacity. It certainly saved him the trouble of silencing by argument that which, thanks to his son's noisiness, was not audible. The room became crowded with Jews, whose anxiety to argue, and readiness to hear on this, as on many

other occasions, struck me very much. As we left the house, the passages of the Jewish quarter were crowded with eager disputants, each ready to discuss the theological tenets of Christianity and Judaism, while the windows of all the adjacent houses were full of female heads gazing with beautiful and anxious eyes down upon the strangers. Mr. Sinyanki and Mr. Margoliouth answered a running fire of questions and objections which were hurled upon our retreat by the assembled mob of Chachams, rabbis, and students, till at last, finding two of the assailants apparently anxious to learn and discuss the doctrines of Christianity, an appointment was made for them to come next day to the house of the mission, and talk over the matter calmly and solemnly. A Jew here objected to one of the inquirers, that he had, by causing Mr. S. to write an appointment for the hour of meeting, made an Israelite (for Mr. S. is a Jew by birth) break the sabbath; such is one of the knotty and far-fetched questions with which these fanatics occupy themselves, and they certainly illustrate very similar objections which were made to our Lord with respect to the sabbath.

That night there was a terrible thunderstorm, attended with a very heavy fall of rain, yet in the morning such was the dryness and absorbing

nature of the soil and rocks, that the traces of wet were barely perceptible. We had the service of the Church of England together in a room of the Jewish Mission House, and Mr. Margoliouth gave us a sermon upon the lesson for the day (Deut. iv. 9, 10). After the service, the two Chachams *, who had been appointed, came and entered into a very long controversy with Messrs. Margoliouth, Nicolayson, Sinyanhi, and Schwartz in the Hebrew language. The terms of disputation having been settled, the Talmud and the New Testament being disallowed as authorities, and reference being only permitted to the Old Testament as a standard, a very orderly discussion took place upon these three points, which Mr. M. undertook to prove:—First, that Messiah is come already; secondly, that Jesus of Nazareth is that Messiah; and, thirdly, that there is no other salvation but by faith in him. It would far exceed the limits which my time and this volume will admit of, to detail the very interesting arguments by which these points were defended and attacked.

The discussion lasted several hours, and ended

* The name of one of these was Chacham Yechirda, a young man said to have been a collector for the Jews in India, and a fine intelligent fellow he seemed.

in an application by one of the parties for a New Testament.

The first day I was in Hebron, there was a marriage procession through the streets, about four o'clock in the afternoon, consisting of a long troop of women, clad mostly in white, and dancing, waving their arms, and uttering all sorts of loud cries, as they went along. In front of them, a little apart, were two or three with tambourines or timbrels, which they strummed most violently; and in the midst of the chief company was the bride, with a red veil over her head. Children ran in troops, and seemed to be a part of the procession. They paraded the streets in this manner without a single male in their procession; but in the middle of the night I was roused from my slumber by a great shouting and flashing of torches, and "behold the bridegroom came," and paraded with his male friends the streets in like manner as the women had done in the day time. All this, which of course has been often seen and reported before, throws a strong light on many passages of Scripture, the parable of the ten virgins particularly.

There is a very large Moslem cemetery to the south-west of the city, which reached almost up to the olive-ground where our second encampment was. These places, as in this instance, are

often unenclosed, and there seems no consecration or appropriation of the ground for the purposes of sepulture, in consequence of which I have often seen old Moslem burial-grounds destroyed and used for other purposes.* In the afternoon of a fine day, the Turkish women crowd in these cemeteries, and under the shade of the trees, and here they sit on the bare ground, talking, and laughing, and amusing themselves with the gambols of their children for many hours at a time.

On the rise of a hill at the back of this cemetery is the new quarantine establishment, which was, during the time of my visit to Hebron, in process of erection. The French "médecin," who was appointed to take charge of it, treated us with great civility, and showed us the excellent preparations which were making to incarcerate unhappy travellers, and put a few hundred piastres in the pockets of a number of placemen. Admirably calculated as these establishments in the East are to impart the diseases which theorists and avaricious men would persuade us they prevent, injurious as they are to the commerce and wealth of the districts and countries sur-

* I was struck with this, especially at Constantinople and on the Bosphorus.

rounded by them, it is rather wonderful that the tide of civilisation should have made so little impression on the system of quarantine. The absurd idea of Egypt, Syria, and the Turkish empire putting each other into a state of perpetual quarantine, and so checking the progress of their trade, and the important influx of strangers (who will always go a long way round to avoid a quarantine) is, however, a striking proof of the short-sighted policy of the rulers of Islam, and the ill-concealed hatred which exists between the Pacha of Egypt and Sultan Abdul Medjid. In digging for the foundations of this genteel prison at Hebron, a great hole was found, containing the bones of about three hundred men; these are supposed to have been the remains of Ibrahim Pacha's troops, who were killed at the siege of Hebron, when that bold leader subdued Palestine by the terror of his achievements.

About a mile and a half from Hebron, in a continuation of the same valley towards the west, stands the celebrated old oak, known by the natives and travellers as "Abraham's Oak." We visited this remarkable tree soon after our arrival at Hebron, and were very anxious to have passed the night and the ensuing sabbath under its grateful shade. But unfortunately some one suggested that this would not be safe unless we had

a guard from the governor of Hebron; and this delusion (for delusion I am quite persuaded it was) put a stop to the whole project. For his Excellency at once declared that no amount of caution would enable us to pass a night in such a dangerous place as the vale of Mamre, not even a guard of twenty men; because his predecessor, the celebrated Abd-er-Rahman, who had been recently turned out of the governorship of Hebron, would infallibly feel it his duty to plunder all whom he could find without protection in that neighbourhood, to prove that he (Abd-er-Rahman) alone was capable of keeping the country in a state of order and peace. Yet, in consideration of the love his Excellency bore to us ("Blessed," said he, parenthetically, "be the beards of your great-grandfathers)," he would cast over us the shadow and wing of his protection, if we would keep within the limits of his city, and send us two of his most well-beloved, most special, and most trusty guards, as a slight token of the extraordinary affection which he bore for all the "Inglese," and for ourselves in particular. The end of all this was that we had to give up our encampment under the oak, and to pay a couple of lazy, smoking, half-naked men (who officiated as soldiers only under the transparent pretence that the clumsy blunderbusses they brought with

them would go off) for sitting up and singing dismally nearly all the night. Disappointed of our day's rest under the oak in Mamre, we determined at least to spend a few hours under it, and to take a meal there. So on the Monday morning (May 15th), in leaving Hebron to return to Jerusalem, we deviated from the direct road, and passed on betimes to the shadow of this renowned tree, where, after pitching our tents and wandering about, we took our morning meal.

At our first visit, Mr. Margoliouth had read aloud the 18th chapter of Genesis, and the influence of the place, undisturbed by childish trumpery, or artificial attempts to stimulate religious fervour, was certainly deeply powerful. I felt restored in a marvellous way to the times of the patriarchs, when Abraham received angels at his tent door, and bid them to wash their feet, to rest under the tree, and to partake of his hospitality, all in this very vale of Mamre: when Isaac not far from him "went out to meditate in the field at even-tide," (Gen. xxiv. 63.); and when Jacob dwelt in this vale of Hebron, and sent Joseph thence to see after his brethren in Shechem. There was such pleasure, too, in searching out those parts of Scripture history which had the vale of Hebron or Mamre

for their scene, while in that very place so familiar to the patriachs. It seemed to me to add much to the interest to reflect that we saw the general feature of the landscape much as they did, for they, like us, dwelt in tents, and were strangers in the land of promise. A shepherd lad tending a few goats, and leaning thoughtfully on a long staff, the fringed ends of his little red and white turban falling gracefully down his neck, his brown cloak, with broad crimson stripes, harmonising so beautifully with the landscape, seemed to represent to me such a one as Joseph, while a passing camel bearing a half-veiled woman, and two children, led by an ill clad Arab, reminded me of Rachael and her two sons, led by some servant of Jacob's flocks, as they once returned from Padan-aram to Shechem. One of the most pleasant remembrances of this valley to my mind was, that it was the scene of so many friendly meetings; and that too after years of anger and bitterness. It was here at the tomb of their common father, that Isaac and Ishmael met in concord (Gen. xxv. 9.); here when Isaac died Esau and Jacob met to bury him (Gen. xxxv. 29.); and here in this valley came the thrilling tidings to old Jacob, "Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt," which revived the faint-

ing spirit of the bereaved patriarch (Gen. xlv. 25. 27.). What valley in the wide world has looked upon sweeter scenes than these, the holy evidences of kindred affections, which rose superior to envy, and undisturbed by circumstances? While musing on Joseph's history under the tree, I was struck with the greatness of the distance which the sons of Jacob had gone to find their father's flock in Shechem (the present Nablous): it must be three days' journey at the least; yet Dothan is placed by tradition of the Jews two days' journey further north, not far from Safet, where Joseph's well is now exhibited. They resorted to Shechem, I suppose, because Jacob had a field or parcel of ground there, which he bought of the children of Hamor. For the oak itself, under whose shade all these thoughts arose, it is certainly the finest tree which I saw any where in Palestine, yet, of course, it is not of the great age ascribed to it. It is possible to conceive it a thousand years old, for after a certain time in this land of drought the growth of large trees seems to be very slow.*

* In the year 700, Bishop Arculfus saw the *stump* of Abraham's oak. He quotes Jerome as saying that this oak had stood from the beginning of the world. In 1322 Sir John Mandeville found a dry tree without any leaves in this place, and quotes the same legend of its antiquity.

I can scarcely fancy that this oak has been always alone, it must probably have shot up with many others from the straightness, and symmetry of its trunk. The leaf is very small, much less than that of our English oak, but the acorn is large, round, and very rough. The wind from the north-east has given the whole body of the tree a bias to the opposite direction which mars the grace of the whole, yet, it is nevertheless a glorious object, and the contrast between its yellow green foliage, deep shadows, and immense knotted arms, affords endless studies for the painter and lover of the picturesque.* On the top of most of the hills to the north of this valley of the city of Hebron, the mountains of Moab beyond the Dead Sea, or the plain of the Salt Sea, are distinctly visible, though misty with exhalations, so that when Abraham walked with the angels, and communed on the mountain with Jehovah concerning the guilty cities of the plain, he might, from most of these adjacent hills, have been so placed that, on returning early in the morning to "the place where he stood before the Lord," and "looking towards Sodom and Gomorrah, and all the land of the

* The neighbouring rocks abound in lilac, cistus, blue borago, yellow and pink helianthemum, wild garlic, and a long bulimus.

plain," he would certainly see "the smoke of the country going up as the smoke of a furnace;" an idea which the vapour from the plain immediately suggests on regarding the actual scene, although of course we must suppose that the smoke of the first conflagration would be far more striking and awful. We left the oak about 11 o'clock, and proceeded up the valley of Eschol towards Jerusalem. The vines are trained here in a curious manner, two sticks with the stem of the vine are made to form a sort of tripod to which they are tied, and the branches are pendant from the top of this stock. If the size of the fruit and abundance of the crop be any criterion, the plan is a very successful one. Ere we came into the road by which we entered Hebron, we examined a remarkable ruin on a hill to the north of the city, which bears the name of "Beer-Arama." It is apparently an immense oblong structure of two or three courses of stone which do not seem to have borne any superstructure. These stones, however, are very large. Mr. Nicolayson measured one, and found it about six paces and a half (twenty feet), several of them have also the mysterious square mark or holes, which generally seem to accompany Jewish structures. There is a finely built well at the south-west corner of the enclosure;

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the building is called, among the guides and Jews, "Abraham's house." The size of the whole was about sixty-two yards by eighty-five, as paced by Mr. Nicolayson. On returning to the road, after passing the Beit Haram, we came in sight to the westward of the plain of Sharon, stretching away to the Mediterranean Sea. In about three hours we found ourselves once more at the Pools of Solomon, and in two hours and a half we returned through the Jaffa gate of Jerusalem.

CHAP. XV.

THE PLAIN OF SHARON, RAMLAH, JAFFA, CAIPHA, ACRE, ETC.

SUMMER was advancing, the noontide heat of the East was becoming intolerable, the severity of an English winter was past, so I resolved to commence my return home. On the morning of Tuesday the 23d of May, having engaged an Arab dragoman with the needful train of tents, mules, canteen, and baggage, I issued, for the last time, from the Jaffa gate of the Holy city, and cast my farewell glances on its embattled walls, domes, and minarets, as they stood clearly outlined by the brilliant sunlight. And so checking my fretful horse, and studying for a while the aspect of that city, scene of the greatest woes and glories registered by history, to plant and root its memory in my heart, I turned and left at last the mournful trodden-down Jerusalem who preaches in her dust the truth of God's prophetic words. I was accompanied by the Rev. M. Margoliouth and by Mr. Schwartz, and a long train of kind friends followed them for some miles on the road, unwilling to say the

parting word. Passing by the settlement of Lifteh, we entered a very fertile wady, wherein is placed the village of Colhony, or Colonia, around which was an abundance of olives, figs, orange, and pomegranate trees; here we rested a while in the tents of the gentlemen of the American expedition, who were surveying the road from Jerusalem to Jaffa, and who kindly pressed us to assuage our thirst and rest ourselves in their encampment. Shortly after this, ascending a hill, we came in sight of the plain of Sharon, over which we were to pass, divided from us by a succession of rocky hills and fertile valleys. We passed through the village of the celebrated Abou Goosh, the man whose robber exploits so long made the road from Jerusalem to Jaffa unsafe, and who at last threatened even the Holy city itself. The taking of this man was characteristic of Turkish and oriental, political, and executive proceedings. He committed some outrages against the Pacha of Jerusalem, and so enraged that functionary, that he applied for aid from Constantinople to crush the marauder. When the 2000 troops landed at Jaffa to execute the sublime vengeance of the insulted government, before they dared to pass on to Jerusalem, these valiant soldiers of the Crescent asked a safe conduct of the very man they were

come to destroy. He gave it, was finally captured by chicanery, and laments to this day, in prison, the hour in which he trusted to the honour of a Turk. In the village of Abou Goosh, the house of this chieftain towers above the rest, and the ruins of an old Gothic church are conspicuous.

We descended through well-wooded rocky villages gradually into the plain of Sharon, by roads which must form a great contrast with those whereby Solomon conveyed from Joppa the beams and treasures of Lebanon for the building of his temple.

We now entered the plain of Sharon, which, although greatly inferior in its state of cultivation to what it would be in European or American hands, yet seemed to me to be better tilled than any other part of Palestine which I visited. I speak of course generally; though, even for particular parcels of ground, I think the gardens of Jaffa are the best and most flourishing in the land. Large crops of wheat and barley (now ripe), fields of tobacco (the curse of the East), dhowa (Indian corn), melons, and gourds, appeared on all sides, and near the villages, of which we passed two between Abou Goosh and Ramlah, these crops were enclosed with high hedges of prickly pear, which forms a most impenetrable

fence. Yet even in this plain, whose rich soil wooes the culture of the husbandman, much of the land "enjoys her sabbaths," and is covered only with the wild artichoke, blue larkspur, pink ipomœa, and a crowd of rank weeds. Here I first saw a graceful fly, with strange long hinder wings, dancing about over the rude herbage. In about seven hours we reached Ramlah, placed on a slight undulation in the plain, surrounded by gardens and olive groves, and containing in its ruined mosques and houses the evidences of having been once a considerable city. We passed through the town and pitched our tents to the south-west of it, near a large ruined Saracenic building, which has a lofty square tower visible many miles across the plain, from the summit of which tower a very fine view is obtainable of the whole plain, from the sea to the mountains of Judæa and Samaria. To the north-north-east the minarets of Lyd appear through a grove of trees, apparently some five or six miles from Ramlah. Three hours ride the next morning brought us to the gardens of Jaffa, which are without question the most beautiful and productive of any in this country. Life, and energy, and industry seems here to exist, as though to show us what a glorious land the land of Israel is when well cultivated. Each

enclosure, hedged in with prickly pears, vies with its neighbours in the richness and variety of its produce. Groves of palms, walnut, and fig-trees, apricot, mulberry, plum, pear, pomegranate, and almond; the golden fruit and scented blossom of oranges, and lemons, and citrons; the clusters of the vine, and the huge yellow bunches of the banana, make up a succession of rich scenes, and an abundance of the fairest fruits of the earth which I have rarely seen rivalled in any one climate. Indeed, I was afterwards informed that the productions of all climes will flourish here, and that the soil is found especially well suited to the culture of the potatoe. But they have tolerable roads to the sea, and abundance of water, the two grand requisites, without which (to speak of human agencies) this country cannot revive, or be brought to a high state of cultivation. The manner of obtaining and using the water here is curious, and deserves attention, as showing how many sources of natural wealth are available only by exertion and ingenuity.

There is no river here, so deep wells are sunk, which furnish a copious and lasting supply. Over these wells a double chain of earthen vases, attached to a rope or band of withes, is kept constantly revolving by means of a wheel which is worked by a mule. This chain is on the well-

known principle of the hydraulic wheel, the vases descending on one side empty, and returning on the other filled with water, which is discharged at the top into a channel prepared for it, communicating with little rivulets all over the gardens. The pleasant sound of the plashing water from the great number of these wells which are found in the environs of Jaffa, adds greatly to the delight of these gardens, and raises up a vision of what this whole land of Israel shall be, when she shall again give her increase, and every man sit in peaceful joy under his vine and fig-tree.

On entering Jaffa, which is somewhat superior to most of the cities of Palestine, and bears, next to Beyrout, the marks of European activity, we called upon Dr. Assaad Y Kayat, the English consul, a gentleman who, during his residence in England, excited so much sympathy on behalf of the Syrian church and people.

It was Queen Victoria's birthday, and the British representative was receiving visits of ceremony from Jews, Turks, and Christians in his consular uniform; we accepted his invitation to dine, when he treated us with a lamb roasted whole, and stuffed with rice and divers other oriental delicacies. The Jews resident in Jaffa are not numerous, but many pass through in

transit to Jerusalem; we called on the chief rabbi, a man of most benevolent countenance, but found him engaged with the late governor of Jaffa in certain money transactions. As the ex-governor conversed in Turkish, one of my friends in Hebrew, the other in Italian, I in French, and two other persons in Arabic, there was an odd confusion of tongues; the rabbi, however, understood us all, and dilated on the fact with some little pride. The Jews were assembled in the synagogue to mourn publicly over the death of the chief rabbi of Jerusalem, which had just taken place; many of them were from Tunis and the north coast of Africa.

We had met on the road from Jerusalem a company of fourteen Jews, the members of three families, who were going up to the Holy city as applicants for instruction in Christianity, with a view to baptism. If you will believe the guides, the house of Simon the tanner yet stands by the sea side, in the form of an old Saracenic edifice.*

* There is a Roman Catholic convent at Jaffa for the receipt of pilgrims. The governors of it lately turned out certain Jewish converts of our English church, of high respectability, and refused to give them shelter, on the ground that the baptism of our Anglican church did not make them Christians; therefore they were still Jews, and as such to be treated like infidels and dogs.

The sea-beach is worthy the observation of geologists; at first sight it seems covered with loose bivalve shells of a species of Pectunculus, cast up by the waves, but on removing the upper surface a rock is found in the process of formation, composed of a rude though closely set conglomerate, which contains a large number of these bivalves. This rock is, in many cases, of considerable depth, and stretches out into the sea as far as I could observe the shore, and is so completely indurated that I saw large slabs of it in Jaffa, hewn and squared for steps, pavement, and building stones, though the larger part of the building materials used in recent houses were brought, as I was told, from the ruins of Cæsarea, where they are to be had for fetching. I observed more or less of this tendency to form new rock all along the coast of Palestine, from Jaffa to Saida; at Tyre (Soor) the ruins and columns of that city's departed greatness have even been incorporated with the solid rock; and it may be the bones of ancient Phœnicians will one day be discovered in this new fossil deposition, and cause as much discussion as the "Homines Diluvii Testes" at Guadaloupe. The harbour of Jaffa is very poor; to repair it and make it capable of sheltering vessels, would be an obvious measure to

any government really desirous of the welfare of Palestine; as this step, and the formation of a good road or railway from Jaffa to Jerusalem, both perfectly feasible projects, would be of the greatest importance to the welfare of Jerusalem and the interior.* We struck our tents betimes the next morning, and passed the Gothic gate of Jaffa, now crowded with the market women carrying for sale their little baskets of apricots, figs, and white mulberries, and their larger ones filled with the little gourd so much eaten by all the people, a pretty and gay scene. We followed for a short time the course of the coast northwards, through nearly two miles of gardens, many of them evidently quite recently enclosed and planted, a most rare spectacle in this unhappy country, where no farmer seems to dream of the future.

If ever Englishmen or Jews settle in the Land of Promise, I do not know any neighbourhood so

* Such is the stupidity of the Turkish government, that when, some years ago, an European company (chiefly British) was formed to make a good road from Jaffa to Jerusalem, the Pacha forbade it; having been persuaded that the English only wanted to bring cannon from the coast to take Jerusalem. This is the sort of return we get for shedding the blood and spending the treasure of England to deliver Palestine to the worst of the infidels.

likely to answer the purposes of colonisation and tillage as the sandy plain of Sharon, particularly about Jaffa, where the fertility of the soil is quite wonderful, and springs of water seem obtainable every where for the trouble of digging. In about two hours we came to a small and rather sluggish river, where the arrival of our party started a beautiful white egret from among the feather-plumed water-rush, and a bright blue roller repeatedly crossed and recrossed our pathway. Then we lost our way for a time, being misled by the ignorance of one of our guides, whose pride was so great that he never would admit that he knew nothing of the road, so that he more than once led us into difficulties. In fact, I never saw a more thorough personification of conceit than Yussuf looked, when trotting on a little ahead of us, squatting upon a huge pack-saddle, and singing his dismal Arab ditties at the top of his voice. After passing three or four villages, we came to one (still in the plain) which bears the name of Kaphar Saba, and which Dr. Robinson considers to be on the site of ancient Antipatris, where St. Paul rested on his way from Jerusalem to Cæsarea (Acts, xxiii. 31.). There were, however, very few marks of an old town, if we except the mound on which the village is built, and a few broken columns. We

lunched here, in a garden, and excited the liveliest wonder among the fellaheen, who came and sat round us, watching our every movement with undisguised curiosity. When we had finished, one of them grew bold enough to enter into conversation, and asked, preliminarily, whether we were really the friends of Abdul Medjid; on which point our dragoman satisfied him fully. He then stated a medical case with considerable action and apparent sympathy, and implored the assistance of the Inglise to administer all necessary medical relief, because it was a thing well known to all but the most ignorant (cursed be the beards of their great-grandfathers!) that the Inglese were all well skilled in the arts of healing. We had great difficulty in repudiating this charge, which was the unanimous opinion of all the Arab sages then and there assembled, as signified by sundry mysterious nods, and divers complex movements of the hands from the regions of the head to that of the heart and the stomach. Indeed, I do not know how we should have maintained a respectable character in the eyes of this assembly had not Mr. M. fortunately thought of his snuff-box, a due administration of the contents whereof having set the whole party into a highly undignified state of sneezing and coughing, we managed to get away ere the

effect of the manœuvre had passed off. Traversing still the hot sandy plain of Sharon (the dried herbage of which was infested with small sand-flies, which got into one's ears and eyes distressingly), near to a small village, we came upon a large party of Arabs engaged in threshing and winnowing corn. Both these acts are illustrative of Scripture language, and have been often adduced for that purpose. A man or boy was seated on a small sledge of wood, and drawn by two oxen, (or, as in one case here, two oxen and an ass,) who were guided by him to tread round and round a large flattened heap of corn: they were unmuzzled, yet were not permitted by their driver to avail themselves much of that circumstance, the antiquity of which reaches certainly to the time of the Mosaic law: "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox which treadeth out the corn." (Deut. xxv. 4.) The corn when threshed out was separated or purged from the chaff by being cast up and down with a four-pronged instrument, which is spread like an open fan, whereby the corn falls on to the threshing-floor freed in great measure from the chaff. So John the Baptist uses this custom as an illustration of the great separation made by the religion of the Saviour between just and unjust: "Whose fan is in his hand," says he of Messiah, "and he will

throughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (Matt. iii. 12.) Commencing to enter the hill country of Samaria, we passed by several villages, one of which, named Funduk, was seated romantically on a round eminence rising from a valley, whence, after passing hills and valleys, with the distant peak of "Gebel-el-Tûr" (Gerizim), and its white wely gleaming in the sun like a landmark, we pitched our tents for the night in a grove of olives at the north-western end of a valley, with the village of Kiryat Jib ("Town of the Beacon") elevated on a lofty hill above us, having travelled from Jaffa eleven hours, our journey having been lengthened by the ignorance of our guide. Passing the night amid the hooting of innumerable small owls, which abound in this neighbourhood, we struck into the main northern road again the next morning (Friday, 26th May) at Nablous, after a ride of an hour and a half. I have already described the few incidents of this second visit to the ancient Shechem and Sychar of the Bible, so that I say no more now than that, after eating of some horrible composition, consisting of milk turned sour with lemons, and called "Leban," which is accounted here a great luxury, we left this city for Jenin. First, we crossed

the ridge of Mount Ebal, which we found barren on both sides, and then, through the silly presumption of Yussuf, we completely lost our road, and got into a deep valley, without very well knowing how to get out again. Most happily, we found an old Arab with his mare, whom, after a lengthened negotiation, we prevailed upon to escort us to the road for the sum of five piastres, the exhibition of which, and the repeated use of the question "Khamsat grush mush taib?" —Are not five piastres a good thing?—put by Mr. Schwartz (whose familiar acquaintance with Arabic was most valuable to us), stimulated the white-bearded old "fellah" to proceed. However, we were obliged shortly to give him the money, as he feared that we only used it as a decoy, never intending to perform our promise: such is the state of public confidence. By the guidance of this old Arab, and afterwards that of a swift footman, whom we procured at the village of Gebal (at the end of the plain of Sanoor), we reached Jenin by dark. Our foot-guide ran excellently, and we trotted, and even galloped, after him, which gave rise near Sanoor to great astonishment among the people in the fields, and a party of horsemen whom we met, all of whom were evidently of opinion that we were chasing some unfortunate, whose life, or at

least whose liberty, was to be immediately forfeited on our overtaking him.* We found our mules, baggage, and tents, which we had sent on from Kiryat Jib, encamped under a great mulberry-tree in the gardens of Jenin, and went to rest amid the hooting of owls and the doleful crying of the jackals.

On the morning of the 27th we crossed once more the great plain of Esdraelon, now diversified with fields of ripe corn and huge masses of tall thistles; among the latter were a great number of insects, chiefly the beautiful fly which I saw in the plain of Sharon, and the winged image of the ant-lion, whose flight is extremely rapid. After about five hours' ride we entered the valley which leads up to Nazareth, where, at a cistern of water carved with half-obliterated Roman work, a number of women were washing

* From Nablous all the way to Beirout I saw at intervals in the rock a beautiful Icosandrous shrub, the flower of a delicate white, with lilac stamina, like an hypericum or myrtle in form. The shrub was low-growing, red-stemmed, and thorny, and loving dry and rocky places. At Nablous I saw it growing out of a high wall in the city. The pink single hollyhock was numerous and gay all the way during this day's journey, especially in the valley of Sanoor. I noted also a yellow convolvulus, with a small leaf, a gay blue and white labiate, with a sage leaf, blue lavender, and common rue in abundance.

clothes, and beating them on the stones with great wooden rollers, in a manner which threw a strong light upon the extraordinary number of holes observable in one's linen after issuing from the care of an Oriental washerwoman. Arrived at Nazareth, we entered the Latin convent, where we had tolerably comfortable rooms assigned to us, and visited the little undignified superior, who evidently prided himself on his acquaintance with English customs, informing his guest-master, in an audible tone, that this nation did not like to travel on the Sunday. We sat talking small things with this dignitary, and sipping little glasses of very strong liqueur (made, as we were assured, by the monks themselves), until a polite interval of time had elapsed, when we returned to our lodging, which was in a building altogether apart from the main convent. This establishment has here a school which contains many children, and they are instructed partly in the Italian language, which accordingly you find spoken by a few individuals throughout Nazareth. We spent our Sabbath here, and I enjoyed myself for several hours in the evening in watching the troops of elegantly clad and graceful women fetching water from the Well of the Virgin, a sight which lost none of its beauty by repetition. At night we were joined by Mr.

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WOMEN OF NAZARETH.

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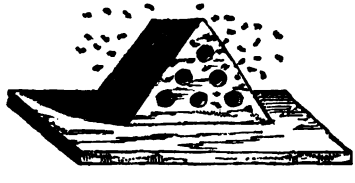
Cohen, the Jewish missionary from Safet, who accompanied us the two next days as far as Acre. On Monday morning we crossed the mountains towards the plain of Megiddo, going in sight of two villages, the one named Beer Yacob, the other seated in a deep dell with a rich mantle of trees, but whose name our guide knew not. We crossed the plain of Megiddo towards Carmel, on approaching which the rising ground was covered with a forest of oak-trees*, and the grass rose to the chests of the horses, mingled with spikes of gay pink hollyhocks. This did not reach to the foot of Carmel itself, where we found a small village called Beled-el-Sheikh, containing, like several other settlements on the sides and at the foot of Carmel, a great number of bee-hives made of pyramids of mud perforated



Bee-hive at Beled-el-Sheikh.

* This oak, though not the same as our English one, is much larger in leaf than the one at Mamre, and resembles the Italian Ilex.

with large round holes. This village has the privilege of paying no taxes, granted to it by a sultan at the instance of some favourite sheikh connected with the place; but it is obliged in return to give gratuitous lodging to all strangers, a part of this engagement which is (as I was informed by one who had tried it) not very decently or religiously carried out. Farther on, beautiful springs of water and pools introduce us to the river Kishon, whose ancient renown is connected with such high events in the sacred chronicles, the overthrow of Sisera*, and the destruction of the prophets of Baal†, now haunted by turtle-doves and wild marsh-swallows. Then we entered Caipha, a poor ruined fishing-town in the bay of Acre, where the roar of the surf broke gratefully on our ears, all hot and thirsty as we were. There seemed to be one good building in the town, the house of the Russian consul, which, joined to those of some other consular dignities, was in process of erection.

We visited the house of a chief Jew, who was an Algerian, whither several of this people speedily resorted. They told us that there were thirty Jewish families resident in the place, but Mr. Cohen estimates them at no more than

* Judges, iv. † 1 Kings, xviii. 40.

twelve or thirteen*: they are chiefly, if not entirely, from Morocco and Algiers. While inquiring about the numbers of the Jews, one of them observed, "It was a sin to count the children of Israel." The Rabbi was a very poor but not an ignorant man: a rummage into his little heap of books exposed the *covers* of an English-printed Hebrew Testament, the interior having been previously extracted as too dangerous to modern Judaism.† We found in the small and dirty synagogue a school of about twenty children; a little lad of the age of twelve read very easily from a Hebrew class-book at Mr. M.'s request: there seems, indeed, always a wonderful thirst for knowledge among these Jewish children.

There is no harbour here except such as the Bay of Acre affords, and the value of this may be gathered from the numerous fragments of wrecked vessels which appear half buried in the sand all the way round the bay.

From Caipha to the monastery on Mount Carmel is but half an hour's ride, through a thin woodland of oak trees, and a road cut in

* Jewish Intelligence, Feb. 1847, p. 66.

† The name of the book should be printed on the outside.

the rock, and walled in with much pains up the side of the steep, on the brow of which, almost overhanging the sea, is placed the Carmelite convent.

The buildings which constitute the present establishment have been erected since the year 1827, and are remarkable for their beauty and comfort, which place them first among the monasteries of the East. The work of their erection, by the zeal and marvellous energy of the last remaining monk of the former convent, has been often and deservedly the theme of European admiration. The overthrow of Napoleon's attempt to take Acre was the signal for the destruction of the older monastery, the monks of which had naturally, if not perforce, extended their charities to the French soldiers. On the ruins of that building the monk John Baptista planned the present splendid establishment, and, filled with the zeal of Peter the hermit, in a nobler or more rational cause, traversed the world, its cities and its courts, for the means to execute his idea; whose perfection is a higher tribute of praise to his energy than any which the traveller can bestow, placed as this establishment is in full contrast with the wretched effect of Mohammedan apathy.

Our guest-master, "Frère Charles," was a very

delightful and obliging man: he showed us the lions of the convent with courtesy and skill. We went first on the roof to see the fine view of the Bay of Acre, and the coast from a headland called "Casso Bianco," on account of its white chalk cliff, to Castel Pellegrino, whose ruins were marked in the extreme southern horizon. Of Carmel itself little is seen from the intervening rocky eminence. Immediately under the mountain (which terminates just over the sea in a lofty headland) some sea-washed ruins were pointed out to us as the site of the ancient Porphyrion.

The convent possesses a good collection of the works of the fathers, with those of the doctors and historians, of the Roman church, so needful to the disciples of a faith whose rule of orthodoxy is confined to no less a limit than the writers and teachers of 1800 years. Beneath is a domed chapel in the Italian style, where visitors are shown the veritable grotto of Elijah, so they say, at least in the convent, and call your attention to the fact, that it is left in its primitive condition without ornament of any kind.* Here,

* In a little pamphlet written by M. Alex. Dumas, put into my hands at Mount Carmel, a most amusing attempt is made to trace an historical title for the grotto from time

on this rock, tradition will inform you, the celebrated trial to which Elijah summoned all the prophets of Baal took place; to this cave the false prophets retired when the heavens were lighted with God's descending and approving fire, and the forest of old Carmel re-echoed the shout of a convinced people — "the Lord he is the God, the Lord he is the God."

The narrative in the First Book of Kings (chap. xviii.) rather puzzled me at first when upon the

present to the days of Elijah. The French novelist speaketh in this wise: — "Carmel has remained in the possession of the faithful unto this very day. Elijah left to Elisha not only his mantle, but also his grotto. To Elisha succeeded the sons of the prophets, who were the predecessors (les ancêstres) of St. John. After the death of Christ, the hermits (religieux) who inhabited it passed from the written law to the law of grace. Three hundred years afterwards, Saint Bazil and his successors gave particular rules to these pious Cœnobites. At the epoch of the Crusades, the monks abandoned the Greek rites for the rites of Rome; and from St. Louis to Bonaparte, the convent built on the very spot where the prophet prepared his altar was open to travellers of every religion and country, and that gratuitously, to the glory of God and of Elijah," &c. (p. 2.) It would have been as well to have given us a clue to the authorities for Elijah's bestowal of "his grotto," the mysterious connection between "the sons of the prophets" and "St. John," and the way in which the three hundred years from St. John to "St. Bazil and his successors" was spent by the eremites of Carmel.

spot. Carmel is a range of hills, extending six or eight miles nearly north and south, from the Plain of Esdraelon to the southern end of the Bay of Acre. Yet the event of Elijah's grand appeal seems to have been transacted near the northern end, whence his servant could look towards the sea, where Kishon is near at hand, and where the mountain rises high. So far all is well; but from this end the city of Jezreel stands at least thirty-five English miles. One of two things is therefore true, if these premises are correct; either that Elijah was miraculously impelled (as the Scripture expression, "the hand of the Lord was upon Elijah," might imply) to run before Ahab's chariot to the entrance of Jezreel, or by Jezreel is meant the plain and not the city of that name* (as in Hosea, v.). Otherwise, supposing these ideas to be ill-founded and untrue, the site of Elijah's sacrifice could not have been at the extreme northern part of Carmel, but must have been rather at the opposite end soon after its rise from the Plain of Esdraelon.†

* Josephus expressly tells us it was the city; but I suppose he drew his narrative from the Book of Kings; so I do not attach much importance to this.

† Elijah's servant could certainly have seen the sea from any part of the top of Carmel.

The top of Carmel is nowhere covered with trees greater than brushwood, or coppice, at least towards the northern end.

We passed a comfortable night here, and rode on to Caipha, whence we took the sea beach as a road round the bay to the town of Acre, the ancient Ptolemais. The shore was strewn with shells of Cardium, Mactra, Lima, Tellina, Haliotis, Venus, Lucina, Donax, Pecten varius, Solen siliqua, Dolium perdix, Purpura hæmastoma, Natica, Murex (not very common), Sepia, and Ianthina. The exudation from the mollusk of this last species, which is very common, stained gloves, paper, and every thing which touched it with a fine dark purple hue, which made me suspect that, if not itself the ancient dye of Tyre, it may have been in some measure connected with the common reputation of the cities of the Phœnician shore for the hues which their ingenuity supplied. The Murex is not at present a common shell on this shore; nor is the Purpura; whereas the Ianthina, from Porphyrion to Tyre, is the commonest mollusk on the coast.

We reached Acre about mid-day, after fording the Kishon and the Belus, which here join the sea; and I could not repress the feeling, as I entered the gates, that these walls, which had proved impregnable when British hearts and arms de-

fended them, had yielded in a few hours at the tempest of Britain's wrath, when she growled from her cannon the summons to surrender.

Once within the walls, the city, which from without looks bold and in good repair (the Turks are industriously mending the breaches made by the English attack), shews all the abject misery, dirt, ruin, and poverty, of a third-rate Arab town. There are well built bazaars, however; and the fortifications to seaward are rebuilding and strengthening in a style which intimates the alarm felt, lest the affair of Nov. 3. 1840, should be repeated, and Europe again annihilate, for the sake of some political dream, the strength and key of Syria.

There is a large mosque, painted outside in horizontal lines, and built after the fashion of those of Constantinople. Water is conveyed from the hills of the anti-Lebanon, at a distance of about four hours, by means of a fine aqueduct, which runs on arches across the level plain. There are many Jews here, but they are very poor, and live in a most crowded and dirty part of the town: the English consul, Mr. Fincey, at whose house we lunched, is a Jew. While we were at our meal, a Jewish fellah, or farmer, came in, dressed in Moslem costume: he seemed ignorant, and very poor. We saw, of course, all the

lions; the place where the French entered, and the stations of the English vessels, with the corresponding bombshells yet sticking in the walls. The cannon and ammunition seemed to be in excellent order, and, as the fortifications are completing, Acre will soon again be a formidable post.*

In the afternoon we sallied forth from the gates of Acre, and passed over the uneven ground beneath the walls where trode the crusading hosts of Europe, from Richard I. of England to Louis IX. of France, and where both these monarchs in their several expeditions raised the often contested wall against the Soldan's power.

* Acre was called Accho (Judges, i. 31.), and afterwards Ptolemais; under which name we find it mentioned as St. Paul's resting-place, for one day, on his journey from Ephesus to Jerusalem. (Acts, xxi. 7.)—Vide *Horne's Introduction*, vol. iii. p. 640.

CHAP. XVI.

FROM ACRE TO BEYROUT.

We passed in a short time the gardens of Abdallah Pacha, containing a pretty villa, and filled with trees and shade, and abounding in water; and, travelling for three hours along a partially cultivated plain in view of the sea, we found our tents and baggage (which we had sent on) in a garden close to the village of Zib *, a small cluster of poor houses on the coast, conspicuous only for its elevation on a slight eminence, and some tall palm trees, which shot their feathered heads into the evening sky.

I walked down to the sea, going by a well where the women were laughing and fetching water, and strolled on the beach for some distance: it was here rocky, with low dangerous reefs, some of which were nearly half a mile out at sea, just emerging from the water. The whole rock seemed to be partly composed of conglomerate, formed, as at Jaffa, by the action of the

* Probably the Achzib of the book of Joshua.

sea water, and still increasing by continued agglutination. On the beach grew much of the sea lavender (Statice echioides), whose pretty lilac flowers attracted a number of very large hornets; on their leaves were many small helices of the genus pupa, a race of land mollusks, which I have before found to love the neighbourhood of the sea.* The turtle doves came down in pairs to drink salt water out of the creeks, a habit I was not before acquainted with, although I knew all pigeons to be fond of salt. In the evening the fire flies were very numerous and beautiful; and the jackalls treated us to a dismal concert, which lasted till daybreak.

I saw at this place a great many scenes of that shepherd life which is so often alluded to in Scripture, and which is so beautifully and constantly presented to a traveller in the East. They are well known to all; yet I cannot pass illustrations so striking entirely in silence. It was evening at Zib, and the bleating of the flocks attracted my attention. As I looked up the roadway, a cloud of dust announced the coming multitude. They were *sheep and goats unseparated*, and were

* In the island of New Providence, Bahamas, *Pupa mumia* is found in abundance on the sand-hills against the sea, down to the very water-mark. Mr. Cuming observed a Bulimus with the same habits (*B. Rosaceus*) in the southern hemisphere.

preceded by their shepherd carrying a lamb in his arms, who often turned round and *called the leaders by their names*, and they, *hearing and knowing his voice*, quickened their pace at his words. He led them into the rude circular fold, made of thorns, almost in front of our tents, which *they entered by means of the one only door**, at which the shepherd stood counting them as they went in. *Without was the dog* keeping guard, and at the door of the fold lay the shepherd himself: *none could enter into the door but by him.* In the morning they were gone early, even before we rose, which was about five o'clock, and on inquiry of our muleteers, who had been talking with the shepherd, they told me (through my dragoman) that he kept his flock at night in this sheepfold for *fear of robbers and jackalls* †, for *they were his own sheep* ‡, and he was *gone out to find pasture* § with them *by the side of a still stream* ‖ about an hour's distance. Now although I had met with all these most interesting traits of Eastern shepherd life before, yet here they were all so wonderfully united that I prefer to present them entire as I now actually received them, rather than mar their effect by disuniting

* John, x. 1. 2. 7. 9. † John, x. 8. 12. ‡ Ibid. xii.
§ John, ix. ‖ Psal. xxiii. 2.

them. And it is, to my mind, one of the most valuable objects of study which the Holy Land affords this pastoral occupation; because we find in it not only such complete pictures of the relation in which our blessed Redeemer portrayed himself as standing towards us, and see therein the strength of his argument, and the state of complete dependence we are in towards Him; but also we gather how completely God incarnate took upon him the nature of man, when he was made flesh and dwelt among us, in that he saw with our eyes, and observed as we do the simplicity and beauty of these shepherd scenes. Can we doubt that He whom David before had named his shepherd *, had frequently watched with interest the scenes to which He so often alluded: "He shall separate them one from another *as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats.*"† He says in one place, "when He (the shepherd) putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them and the sheep follow him; for they know his voice ‡," is used by him as a figure of himself; of Him the prophet wrote before, "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arms and carry them in his bosom, and he shall gently lead those that are with

* Psal. xxiii. 1. † Matt. xxv. 32. ‡ John, x. 4.

young." * And with what solemn feelings, what deep emotion must our Lord have looked upon all these various scenes, for he knew well as God, that of Him it had been prophesied that "He should be brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he should not open his mouth †," "that his blood, as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world ‡," "without spot and blemish §," "should fill up the measure of Jerusalem's iniquity, and bring upon her God's vengeance for the blood of the prophets, from righteous Abel, the keeper of sheep ‖, to himself;" and yet, as that of God's own lamb, should "take away the sins of the world," and so he blends this conscious solemn note with the sweet music of his parable. "I am the good shepherd, the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." ¶

Early in the morning we left the gardens of Zib, and passed near the sea shore until we arrived in about two hours at the end of the plain which extends from Carmel to the mountains of Galilee. Here we ascended the mountains by a very rocky path, which continued at no great

* Isaiah, xl. 11. † Ibid. liii. 7. ‡ Rev. xiii. 8.
§ 1 Peter, i. 19. ‖ Gen. iv. 2. ¶ John, x. 11.

distance from the sea, over hills and valleys by miserable villages, with scant gardens, and fountains of water. There were also evident remains of ancient buildings and broken columns. In the middle of the day we passed the celebrated Ladder of Tyre, a road cut in the face of the perpendicular chalk rock, and often overhanging the sea at a most dizzy height.

Scarcely had we lost sight of Carmel, than the greater Hermon and the snowy ridge of Lebanon rose into our view. In about six hours we reached the three springs called "Ras al Ain," which are commonly known as the fountains of Hiram, and are supposed to mark the position of Pæleo-Tyre, or the old city of Tyre, on the main land. There are three separate cisterns, from each of which a copious stream of fine spring water issues; the workmanship of these reservoirs is rude and massive. The water is said to be conducted from the Anti-Libanus (a distance of about three miles) by subterranean aqueducts of very high antiquity. Of Palæo-Tyre not a vestige remains, — thanks to accumulating sand and Alexander the Great.

Modern Tyre, or Soor, as it is now called, is placed at the end of a sandy promontory, which is so wide at its narrowest part, that it is at

first difficult to suppose it only accumulated upon the nucleus of the causeway made by Alexander from the main land to the island on which Tyre was, in his day, placed. Yet there is no doubt at all that this promontory is artificial, or rather the isthmus which connects the city of Tyre with the continent, and that it had no existence before Alexander erected his mole to besiege the resisting city. The present town is a hot and miserable place, although the Tyrians have planted many trees in their streets and gardens: its commerce seems to be no greater than that of an English fishing village of half its size: there were four little boats with lateen sails in the ruined and shallow harbour. Yet though the sand of the beach be white and glaring, and the vessels poor, they possess an interest; for here took place that solemn parting prayer which St. Paul joined with the early Christians of Tyre in uttering (Acts, xxi. 5.); and in such a ship the apostle probably travelled in his journey from Ephesus to Cæsarea.

Fallen, indeed, is the greatness of the ancient mistress of the Phœnician seas, her harbour, once thronged with the world's traffic, now ruined, destroyed, and obscure; her once princely merchants are now to be sought for in the pages of the traveller. Yet there is a town of some

two or three thousand inhabitants, which in later times has undoubtedly much improved, though the strides made by Sidon, and more lately by Beyrout, will probably prevent any great advancement in the wealth and commerce of Soor.

We found a most comfortable asylum from the heat in the spacious house of a Greek merchant, Atallah by name, who, claiming the protection of the English flag, under the theory that he is the consular representative of that nation in the port of Tyre, was most hospitable in his reception of us, and gave us a fine airy room at the top of his house, commanding a fine view of the town and bay.

The appearance of the greater Hermon and the Lebanon from our windows was beautiful in the extreme, and must have formed a leading feature in the prospect of insular Tyre.

The ruins of an old building are shown, which I took to be Saracenic; but Robinson thinks them part of a Greek church; several prostrate columns (one a double one) of red syenite granite may fairly be considered as part of some ancient Tyrian building; they are too massive for recent works, when Tyre was only a provincial town, and their giant forms demand our wonder, and make us feel the vastness of the proud city's overthrow.

Next day we travelled along the sea-coast, strewn with broken columns and ruins, and passed a very rich and finely-watered country between Soor and the mountains. On the sea-shore many crabs had made holes in the sand, just above high water mark, into which they retreated with marvellous rapidity at our approach.* At the mouth of the river Kassimya, we had to make a detour from the coast along its banks, from the tall sedgy fringe of which we roused a black and grey kingfisher and a small bittern †, until we found a bridge. I had here an adventure which had well nigh proved a serious one, for, while riding a little in advance of my party, an Arab fellah (one of a party of reapers) suddenly rushed up in front of me, and, seizing my horse by the bridle, he presented his sickle in a very menacing attitude, and, scowling at me, uttered a rapid speech, the only intelligible part of which, to my ear, was "backsheesh," an idea which, as I happened to have a loaded gun in my hand, I was not inclined to listen to favourably. Yet I do not know how I should have pleasantly

* The grey-backed gull was common here.

† There were many tortoises here, feeding on the roots of an amaryllis. In a puddle of water I found a brood of water-tortoises, each about two inches long; and observed several specimens of the green frog.

extricated myself from the man, had not the click of my trggier and the arrival of my party turned his scowls into smiles, and assurances that "he did but jest." In about two hours we came by a village seated on the side of the hills; the neighbourhood seemed fertile, and the adjacent rocks perforated with caves. This was the modern Sarafand and ancient Sarepta, the Zerephath of the Old Testament; the scene of Elijah's miracle in behalf of the poor widow woman (1 Kings, xvii.). The whole of our day's journey all along the sea-coasts of Tyre and Sidon, led us over broken columns and cisterns, and the dust of ruined towns and villages, which no doubt once enlivened the coast of old Phœnicea, just as in the Gulf of Genoa at present. Near Sarafand we rested for a while at a beautiful cistern and fountain called "Ain Kantara," overshadowed by large tamarisks. Thence in two hours and a half we reached the town of Saide, or Sidon, placed on a slight promontory in a bay which bears the footsteps of Roman empire in broken sarcophagi, and particularly in a mutilated Roman milliary, with the names "Septimius Severus" and "Pertinax" distinctly legible on it.

Sidon is approached on the south through a shady arch of trees, and is entered on this side through a ruinous gateway in the external wall.

The streets are very narrow and dirty, and the females were assembled in great troops in an extensive cemetery which comes up to the northern end of the city. We pitched our tents under the shade of some "Pride of India trees," in a fertile garden near the sea shore, to the north of Sidon, and were regaled with apricots and bananas, and the loud croaking of frogs. The harbour seems to be nearly blocked up with mud; nevertheless there were more vessels here than at Soor, and there was evidently much more commerce. In fact, until quite recently, since Beyrout has engrossed the traffic from central Asia and Damascus to the nations of Europe, Saide had risen from obscurity, and was becoming the chief port of the Syrian coast. But, although finely situated, with the Lebanon range rising to the north and east, the prosperity of Beyrout has given a blow to Saide as a commercial city, which seems likely to prove a fatal one.

I was much pleased with a beautiful head-dress worn by the ladies on this Phœnician coast at Soor and Saide; it consisted of a small cap with a long tassel, from the hinder part of which a number of strings of black or purple silk depended, falling gracefully over the shoulders, and down the back of the wearer. These strings were ornamented with little round pieces of gold

(often coins) strung plentifully upon them, which, at every movement of the lady, shook and glittered in the light, producing a very rich and brilliant effect.

We found a Jewish guide, who led us through many close, arched passages, to the chief synagogue, where a school of forty-five children were in the full swing of their lessons, reciting, and swaying themselves quickly backward and forward. A more numerous collection of lovely children I never saw together: there was scarcely one which was not positively beautiful, as they gazed in wonder with their bright black eyes and clear complexions on the Frank intruders. Mr. Margoliouth and Mr. Schwartz immediately found an eager troop of inquirers, who entered with readiness into the differences between Judaism and Christianity, and particularly the question, whether repentance was sufficient without the sacrifices of the Jewish dispensation. I understand the visits of missionaries to this place are infrequent; if so, an alteration is desirable, inasmuch as the number and religious anxiety of the Jews of Saida are facts which demand active attention, and promise, humanly speaking, an abundant missionary harvest. The women have many of them high head-dresses, with a black feather or fringe down each side of the face, like

those of Damascus, and I observed many of them of great beauty.

Although Sidon claims an antiquity soaring into the ages immediately succeeding the flood, producing a grandson of Noah as her builder and the author of her name; although she calls even Tyrus and Jerusalem modern, when compared with her; time has acted otherwise with her than he does with the children of men, and has left few traces or furrows as marking his stern passage. A few broken columns are no sufficient hint of her past grandeur or age, and yet they are all which I could find. So farewell to the birthplace of Boetius, and of many great men of their time. I must away and tread the hot sands of thy coast, not unmindful that from their chance fusion first issued (so they write) the crystal glass which is now become with us an article of luxury and use, if not of necessity.

On Friday, the 2d of June, we left Sidon, and rode along the coast, now on the sandy shore, now on the hot and stony cliffs! We crossed two rivers, the one near to Sidon, and the other about three hours and a half from it. The water of the latter was rapid and clear, and was crossed by a broken bridge, against which we halted to lunch. An Arab was fishing with a line and hook, and seemed to meet with tolerable success;

and under the shadow of a crumbling arch it was pleasant to lie and watch his patient efforts, and the gambols of the nimble little "gyrinus natator" which sparkled on the surface of the still waters and eddies, the banks of which were gay with the pink oleanders, the sweet scented clematis, and the wild white rose.

Then came a long tract of sandy barren road by the sea shore, which let in the horses' feet, and made them moan and sigh with the heat and toil, and caused us to feel fatigued and exhausted. We reach at last a little Khan, rest for a few moments under the shade of a solitary tree, and encounter again the burning sun and glowing sand. Indeed the last three hours of the road from Saide to Beyrout is over the most barren desert which it is possible to conceive; not a blade of grass relieves the glare of sand and dust; and the heat was, at the time I passed it, most painful, insomuch, that on my arrival at Beyrout, I was seized with an illness which confined me for some days to my bed. Even yet I dwell on the shady lanes and hedged gardens of Beyrout, with its scattered villas, orange groves, and hoary towering Lebanon, remembering the delight which I felt on again entering the most thriving and industrious town in Palestine, and finding myself once more under the roof of host Antonio,

close over the waters which were to bear me once more to the civilised west.

On my recovery from illness I took the first steam-vessel to Alexandria, Malta, and Marseilles, at which latter place I performed five days' quarantine, escaped narrowly the dangers of a French émeute, caused by the workmen of the "atteliers nationaux;" passed to Genoa, thence across the Alps, and down the Rhine to firm and foggy England. But when I cease to tread the shores and hills of the Holy Land, I cease to chronicle; already my rude journal has exceeded the limits which at first I dreamt of, and my theoretical pocket duodecimo has swelled in its course into a large body. So dropping the pen of the journalist, which, as a traveller in a wonderful land, I have presumed to exercise, I close the record of my wanderings with the day in which I left the land of sacred story, and stepped on board the deck of the huge black "Alexandrie."

Reader, farewell! if, in the repetition of an oft told story, my words and thoughts have excited solemn considerations on the state of this country, once blessed of Jehovah, and yet, as we believe, to taste of his mercy; if the eyes of thy compassion and sympathy have been lighted at the brief notices of God's ancient, yet still persecuted,

people; if the reality of the Scripture narrative has in anywise been conveyed to thine heart by this feeble effort to pourtray the scenes and customs of the land of Israel, I am more than repaid; and my treasure, though poor and of small value, has not been hidden in the earth, but has brought back to me a full interest to be rendered to its Giver in the great day of account.

APPENDIX.

CHAP. I.

JERUSALEM. MISSIONS TO THE JEWS, ETC.

If we could suppose a man quite ignorant of History, and of the fathers and commentators of the Christian religion; if, in this unbiassed condition, we could place in his hands the New Testament of our Lord and Saviour, and ask him to read it with attention, I consider that, next to the divine doctrines therein contained, the first fact about which he would be likely to make inquiries would be the present condition of the Jewish nation. And, while the Christian mind was yet unsullied by the vain conceits of the Gnostic originist and Alexandrian schools, ere the casual Paganism of the Roman Court had usurped the throne of Christian spirituality and love to the Saviour, it was so. "Beginning at Jerusalem" the extension of the blessings of eternal truth to the Gentiles, naturally centred the thoughts and the gratitude of the early converts there in the Holy City. But the haughty

prelates of the age of Constantine had learnt to look with contempt, or at least with indifference, on the nation of Paul, Peter, and James; they wrote against them as heretics, but sought them not as brethren. And centuries rolled on, and yet no effort was made to draw Israelites into the church; they were only sought for the rack, the scaffold, or the flames. Oh! shame upon that catalogue of massacres, burnings, and butcherings, and persecutions, and shame on those who wreaked their brutal wrath for ages on God's old, despised and scattered people.*

And England, too, must we not blush for her! When does a Jew appear in English history? but to be tortured by some noble and Christian monarch, perhaps with the cross upon his shoulder, to make him yield his hard-earned treasure. Anathema to all who should hold

* Dr. Hicker's "Epidemics of the Middle Ages" contains the examination of certain Jews in Savoy, questioned by the torture in the castle of Chillon, on suspicion of their having poisoned the wells, an accusation brought against these unfortunate people by the public of that day, who accounted in this manner for the plague, or black-death. It is scarcely necessary to observe that the discoveries of science have demonstrated that the disease arose from natural causes, and that the confessions wrung from the agonised and tortured Jews were entirely false. (Published by the Sydenham Society, p. 74.)

communication with, or sell provisions to, the people of Israel, a prohibition even to enter the *Christian* churches, these were the tokens of missionary yearning which an Archbishop of Canterbury and a Bishop of Lincoln* were forward, but not alone, to promulgate; and our blind kings, led by such blind guides, heaped cruelty upon cruelty, until, in 1290, the great and valiant Edward I. drove more than 16,000 helpless Jews from the shores of England †, and for 350 years no sons of Abraham were permitted even to dwell in our land. But from the time of the Reformation a different state of things arose. Truth having been liberated from the chain of Ignorance in which she had been holden, gradually extended her benefits to the sons of the nation whose daughter she was. And since the time when Reuchlin (in the fifteenth century) translated the New Testament into Hebrew, the hearts of Christians have been gradually warming towards their elder brethren in religious privileges, and in our own times we are permitted at last to see a Christian mission for the Jews in Jerusalem itself.

* Stephen Langton and Hugh de Welles. Dr. M'Caul's Sermon "On the Equality of Jew and Gentile."

† Reynolds' Lecture on the Efforts for converting the Jews, p. 75.

Yet even now, when the knowledge of the revealed will of God has caused the importance of such a mission to be more recognised, even now the hindrances and enemies to the work are not few or contemptible.

A great difficulty, in the carrying out of Jewish missions, is the procuring suitable men for such a work; for a peculiar cast of education is required to which the studies of our universities afford little or no assistance. In the first place, the Hebrew tongue is indispensable, and this not as a dead but a living language; for it is even to this day the medium of communication between the Rabbis and religious Jews in the East, especially in sacred things (as I can most abundantly testify*); and the observation of the Evangelist is applicable as well to the Jews of the present as of his own age, that "when they heard him speak in the Hebrew tongue they kept the more silence."† Then a knowledge of the Talmud, and the customs and feasts of the Jews, is needful for a missionary‡ to this people, that

* Dr. M'Gowan observes of the Jews: "Hebrew is, in fact, their national language to this day." — *Jewish Intelligence*, July, 1847, p. 266.)

† Acts, xxii. 2.

‡ Of course, throughout all these observations, I do not exclude the power of God to convert (as perchance he one

he may be cognizant of their peculiar tone of thought and line of argument, as also with the seasons when he may best find opportunity to introduce his arguments or statements of truth.

For these requisites it will at once appear evident that the education of our colleges makes little or no provision; the literature of Greece and Rome, and the logical system of reasoning there acquired, being inapplicable to the purposes of Jewish controversy. And I hold this to be the main reason (and it is well to hope it is) why so few of the missionaries to the nation chosen by God himself have emanated from Cambridge or Oxford. Indeed this note has been so long sounded without producing any improvement in the odd jumble of classical, theological, scientific, and mechanical subjects, enforced alike upon lay and clerical students, that we can only have a distant hope of zealous men issuing to fight the cause of heaven on the banks of the rapid Jordan, from the crowd of savans and bon-vivants who stalk among the groves of sluggish Cam or Isis.

This difficulty will best be overcome by a

day will) any number of the Jews without these things. When I say indispensable and needful, I mean that they are so far as we can see, our duty only lying to the applying the best means.

careful selection from Jewish converts themselves, who, from the nature of their education and comprehension of the objections to Christianity made by the modern Jews, added to that zeal which such men feel for the conversion of their own nation, are eminently fitted for the office of apostles to the Jews. Perhaps the greatest hinderance of all (to speak humanly) to these missions, is the poverty of the men whom they seek to convert, and their dependence upon aid from Europe for the means of existence.

The Jews of Europe (Poland especially) contribute a part of their substance towards a fund "for the poor Jews in the land of Israel," which is sent over and lodged in the hands of the chief rabbis, and by them distributed to the community. The four holy cities wherein they chiefly reside have little to encourage the hopes of trade, and without protection for their property agriculture would be for a Jew in Syria a dangerous speculation. Hence they are led to remain idle and poor, dependant on the scanty pittance supplied by the charity of their distant brethren. Now, the moment that even suspicion of a leaning to Christianity attaches to an unfortunate Israelite his portion of this pittance is suspended; and this, bad as it is, is not all; for he may have been only an inquirer after truth,

without any idea of embracing the faith of Christ; and until he is really well grounded in the doctrines of Christianity, and has passed a season of probation, experience has proved that it would be dangerous for the Christian missionaries to admit him to the rite of baptism. Thus he is held during that trying period of inquiry in a state of poverty, which is of course a great inducement for him to return to the opinions and maintenance which he has not as yet formerly abjured. And when the step is taken, in despite of these obstacles, things are nearly as bad with him as ever, as far as existence in this world goes, for the proud though despised nation who had stretched out to him before their brotherly assistance and support, now spurn him from their intercourse as an apostate; and the new brotherhood into which he has entered will neither give him employment nor subsistence*, for Gentile Christians fear a greater amount of worldly prosperity to the convert should induce others to make profession of Christianity for the sake of gain. Yes, when the learned, the gay, and the worldly join hand in hand to proclaim the Jewish converts bought and tempted by the hope of gain, though they

* See the Bishop of Jerusalem's Letter, 1847.

know this accusation to be false and ignorant, though they ask these men to point out facts instead of assertions, we cannot wonder that raillery and bitter hatred does it work, and missionaries leave their converts to poverty, lest others might be tempted to become Christians too as a means of advancement. Did I say missionaries? No, no—no convert pleads in vain for bread to them, their means are freely, nobly shared with these poor brethren in the faith; it is the British public that is the stern denier of sustenance to those poor Christians, whom, while in Jewish blindness, no effort was left untried to conciliate, and whose sicknesses were then alleviated with a liberal hand. There have been instances of course where those who seemed to be real converts have turned out otherwise, where pique against their friends or the rabbis, where the love of notoriety, and even the hope of gain (vain hope indeed!) were each the moving cause of some pretended conversion. But is this to be used against those who spend their lives, their strength, and their prospects in this world among the parched rocks of Syria to do their Maker service, as though they were able, like their God, to read their convert's heart? If we read, for instance, in our report, of some seemingly edifying baptism, and then, ere the year passes, find

the neopolite's name among the renegades or disturbers of the public morals, does it follow that the messengers of Christianity must have known the man was insincere? Does it follow that he was insincere at the time of baptism? Are there no such things even in England as instances of men professing Christianity, and working all kinds of wickedness? As though there were not such men, as though Omniscience were a necessary quality for a herald of the Gospel, accusations rise often and loudly against our missionaries, because, forsooth, they have to deal with men as erring and deceitful as ourselves. Enough of this then; let the thousands of men who hate the cause of missions exercise more their sober judgment and less their prejudice, and their bitter words. There is work enough both for them and the missionaries without one hindering the other in the little good that can be done in this world of ours.

I cannot conclude these remarks, however, without observing that the Jewish mission must beware lest the Jewish nation as such, and not the conversion of Jews, become the objects of too large a share of their generosity. The principle of international kindness with any people is a very good one; but societies established and supported for particular objects should be careful

lest, by taking too circuitous a route to the end they design, they miss their aim altogether. And when we find a beautiful hospital*, for whose management as an Englishman I feel proud of my nation, supported at a great cost in Jerusalem for Jews as such; when we observe that the benefits of this institution are enjoyed almost exclusively by the unconverted from their great numerical superiority; when we turn our eyes on those who have given up their friends and their little Jewish trade for the cause of Christianity, and are now often hardly put to it to feed themselves, their wives and children, then I cannot but express my fear that such a course is both unwarranted by the Scripture, and must induce the most disastrous consequences (if not altered betimes) to the cause of Christianity in the East.† The modern Jews begin to suspect that our rulers and our societies have but an indifferent opinion of a religion and a Saviour

* Thirty-two beds are made up in this institution, of whose cleanliness and excellent management and affairs it is difficult to speak too highly. It is on a fine elevation, too, not far from the English church, and commands from the women's wards fine views of the Mosque of Omar and the Church of the Sepulchre, &c. The dispensary (which I believe extends its benefits to all people of all religions) is attended by crowds.

† See the Bishop of Jerusalem's last Letter, 1847.

whom they are so careful to keep in the back ground, and fancy that the conviction of Messiah's advent, and the temporal glory of the Jewish nation, impels the authorities in England to make friends with the future power.

Such are some of the disadvantages to which the spread of the truth in Palestine seems to me to be exposed. Their removal may be difficult, but it is, I believe, by no means impossible. But there are also advantages and encouragements of no common sort attaching to the Jewish missions in a greater degree than to any other; and I conceive that the public attention has scarcely been directed sufficiently to this important point. It is not an uncommon thing to hear some one object to missions to the Jews, on the ground that this people are dispersed, and among the nations; and that, therefore, they are either inaccessible, or else to be approached in common with the nation with whom they abide; that is, that they need not a special mission for themselves. Now both these objections are fallacious, for yet never was any class of persons more accessible than the dispersed of Judah. Of what other body can we say that they live altogether in one quarter of a city, assemble diligently in public places of worship, have all over the world one language, and one

literature, the same text-books, and the same (or nearly the same) usages? Yet such is the case with the Jewish nation; and I must bear witness, with astonishment, to their most extraordinary accessibility, having visited, in company with my friend, many a Jews' quarter, and many a synagogue. As to the other objection, that they need not special missionaries, I have already stated my convictions to be contrary to such an idea.

There is another advantage for the Jewish missionary over any other — he has the Old Testament, "the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms," for a groundwork whereon to erect his religious arguments, because these are acknowledged as well by the men of Israel as by himself; and I have been often delighted to notice the way in which these Old Scriptures are made to bear upon, introduce, and support the testimony of the New in the controversies and conversations of our teachers with the Jews.* And

* A common objection is made by Jews against the divinity of Christ by quoting the passage in Mark (xi. 13.), where it is written that Jesus, seeing a fig-tree, came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves. He could not be God, say they, or he would not have sought when he knew he should not find. But these objections are silenced by a

the mission to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel" has no lack of encouragement now-a-days: a spirit of inquiry has been evoked from its long slumber among this people, and they have learned, in the chief missionary stations at least, to discriminate between Christian idolaters and Christian English.* Great confidence is felt by the Jews in the kindly feeling of the English missionaries towards them, and these last are often made referees and advisers of the Jews, sentences of excommunication by the Rabbis being quite disregarded. It is to be hoped that the desire of preserving such confidence does not hinder any of the messengers of the Gospel from taking all opportunities of proclaiming their errand, otherwise this sort of friendship (which simple kindness will engender) is prejudicial to the cause of truth. Although the number of converts is not such as we read of in Apostolic times, or in those wonderful operations of the power of truth in

parallel text in Isaiah (v. 4.), where Jehovah says, "When I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes."

* The translation of our Liturgy into Hebrew is said to have produced the most favourable impression as to the English church; its conformity with the Old Testament and the use of the Psalms being entirely new to them.

modern days in New Zealand, yet, considering the small agency in operation, the character of the people attached, and the hindrances I have already alluded to, the effect produced, even in this way, seems to have been considerable. The Bishop of Jerusalem, in his Pastoral Letter for 1847, states, that since 1839 thirty-one adults and twenty-six young Israelites have been baptized in the Holy City alone. I was personally witness to the baptism of a distinguished Rabbi of Salonica on Good Friday (as I have already stated), and the day I left Jerusalem fourteen Jews went up from Jaffa to be baptized there, the members of two Israelitish families. And although the New Testament* is denounced, and anathematized, and forbidden by the Rabbis, yet it is undoubtedly secretly read and studied, and produces at intervals (under the application of the Holy Spirit) those wonderful conversions, even in the most violent open enemies of Christianity, which we are wont to consider peculiar to

* Here let me pay my tribute of praise to the Bible Society for the magnificent work which it has undertaken, and carries out. I have found in all parts of the world where I have travelled their Bibles in the language of the country, often the only ones which were obtainable. Syria and in Palestine they are to be seen in Hebrew in the cupboards of every synagogue and in the schools: there is an excellent depôt at Smyrna.

the times of St. Paul.* The Old Testament, too, is received, and, indeed, sought for, with eagerness; and, if the false notions of the Rabbinical school on the value of tradition could be conquered, the demand for the pure word of truth would become increased, and the results would, humanly speaking, be greater for the cause of Christ. Such are the observations which a personal inquiry presented and suggested to me during my stay in the Land of Israel, upon the subject of Jewish missions. The examination divested my mind of many difficulties which possessed it before; impressed me unexpectedly with a new fact—the ease whereby the Jewish people are approached, and completely satisfied my mind that a plain and practical work is commenced, and calling loudly for assistance. And I trust it is not presumption to hope that the day is not far distant

* Mr. M. told me a remarkable anecdote of one young Jew, who was so violent against Christianity, that, when argued with, he actually tore the New Testament from Mr. M.'s hand, and trampled it under foot. Mr. M. calmly picked it up, and adduced his violence to him as an evidence that he was probably wrong; and the result was, in a few days he came, with tears in his eyes, to apologise, and ask permission to read the New Testament. The study of this volume was made the means of his conversion to the faith soon afterwards.

when prejudice, irreligion, and worldly wit, being less feared, and less powerful, the pious bishop of the Jerusalem Protestant church shall be really, as well as theoretically, the head and director of its spiritual affairs, a greater number of missionaries shall be employed, and those who are employed shall be selected only for their zeal, their piety, and their knowledge of the work they have to do. These are the methods which I apprehend to be the most practical, and such as sound principles and the experience of practice alike approve.

But in all these efforts the measure of success is, of course, in the hidden will of the Eternal God, and we have only always to remember, that, in putting means of any kind in motion for the fulfilment of our duty, and the exercise of our love to him, we are bound to exercise all the faculties given to us for the attainment of the best, conscious all the while that, though He has promised to bless the use of such, and ordinarily operates by them, yet that He can, if he will, do His own work without the aid of any means whatever.

CHAP. II.

THE DIFFERENT SECTS OF THE JEWISH SYNAGOGUE.

I HAVE been more prolix, perhaps, than travellers usually are on the subject of missions to the Jews; but this will be tedious chiefly to those for whom the subject has little interest at any time, and to those I may give my advice (probably anticipated) to omit the perusal of the last chapter altogether. I must now endeavour to state the result of the few observations I was able to make on the Jews, although in the whole of my tour occasional notices of them of course occur in the chief places of their residence.

The modern Jews of Syria and Palestine are divided into two great classes, severally denominated the Sephardim and the Ashcanazim; the first consisting of the descendants of the Spanish Jews, banished from Europe in the reigns of Ferdinand and Isabella, and of Charles the Fifth; and the Second, being chiefly from Poland Germany. The Sephardim are the most wealthy of the Syrian Jews. At Damascus their houses are adorned with great splendour, though fear compels them to present a round wall on the outside

to the eyes of an unjust and avaricious Pasha. In Jerusalem there are very few wealthy Jews: of this class are the proper Jewish inhabitants of the country since the time at least of their Spanish expulsion, the Ashcanazim consisting in chief (though not entirely) of persons who have come to the Holy Land from religious motives, with a view of ensuring a passage to Heaven by laying their bones in the valley of Jehoshaphat. Judæo-Spanish (a mixture of Hebrew and Spanish), Spanish and Hebrew, are the languages chiefly spoken among the Sephardim. They are a very handsome race, with black eyes and hair, and the younger women are often of great beauty. Their dress is very much like that of the Moslems, though somewhat less gay, a turban, an under-surtout or tunic with sleeves, bound round the waist with a silk or shawl girdle, and extending nearly down to the feet, a loose over-coat, lined with silk or fur, with red or yellow sleeves. This is the every-day garb. The learned, the Rabbis, and some of the students, wear a high dark-blue velvet cap, having a black and white scarf or turban wound round the lower part, — a singular headdress, peculiar to the Jewish people. They pretend that the whole of this dress is very ancient, — upon what foundation, I know not; but it gave an interest

to their costume to imagine it might be nearly the same as that worn by our blessed Lord and his Apostles. I took, in Jerusalem, the likeness of a youth about fourteen years of age, the son of Rabbi D. S. Majahr, a lad of studious habits and considerable intelligence; and while he rested his head upon his hand, and sat down, in the Eastern fashion, on a cushion upon the floor, gazing with a curious and rather melancholy air on the progress of my operations, I could not but reflect that such might have been the appearance of "the child Jesus" when he sat in the Temple in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions. The Sephardim have in most cases a separate synagogue from the Ashcanazim, but they have only one chief Rabbi. With this class are generally associated the Jews of Tunis and of North Africa, who are mostly of the same Spanish descent.

The *Ashcanazim*, though poorer in general than the last-named class, are said to be more addicted to learning*, and to be stricter in their ceremonial observances. When we remember that

* One of them, Joseph Schwartz by name, has published an interesting guide to Jerusalem and the neighbourhood; in which, as I understand (for it is written, of course, in Hebrew), he more than once throws away the evidence of tradition.

they are chiefly composed of men and women who have come to the land of their fathers at great risk and in great poverty*, to lay their bones near the site of their old Temple, we naturally expect that they should be a religious class. There is a sect of this party which professes more than ordinary strictness, and is called by the name of "Hassadim" (or "Chasidim"). When I was at Hebron I had an opportunity of witnessing the service of this sect in a synagogue there on the morning of a Jewish Sabbath. The behaviour of these men on that occasion was quite painful to observe: in children it would have been ludicrous; in men it was distressing.

Upon the theory that their several strange actions promoted the more perfect abstraction of the mind from outward things, to the contemplation of the law of God, they swayed themselves to and fro with great violence; they groaned, they cried, they uttered the wildest and most whimsical sounds, and one old man with a white beard of great length, bent his head in seeming

* I have met with many of this class travelling to the Holy Land; and I remember a poor old woman, who must have been seventy years old, and who was journeying from Russia to Jerusalem all by herself. When I saw her she was in a steam-vessel, crowded amongst the goods on the fore part of the deck.

anguish against the door of the cupboard where the law was kept, and knocked loudly upon it with his clenched hand.* In some of the younger portion of them I frequently detected a smile when they thought themselves unobserved; but there were others whose emaciated faces, flashing eyes, and deep apparent devotion, impressed upon my mind the strongest conviction of their sincerity. One of these read the portion of the Law appointed for the day, swaying his head and the upper part of his body violently backwards and forwards, and chanting the words in a rapid and dismal tone, with certain inflections at the close of the sentences, and in particular passages. This species of chant is, as I was informed, according to a prescribed formula which requires considerable study before the exact accentuation is acquired; and so practised is the ear of these Jews to this sort of recitative that the slightest mistake is immediately detected, and noticed aloud in the synagogue, by the members of the congregation. It is a curious subject of inquiry to trace the same principles operating

* Some of them sang in a squeaking voice, some tossed their hands wildly about, and others laughed in ecstacy. There were several little children going through many of these wild ceremonies with a solemnity peculiar to the youth of the Jewish people.

in nearly the same manner in different ages of the world, changing only their name. In the days of our Lord the strictest and most ostentatious of the Jewish sects was that of the Pharisees: in our days this body retains little but the name, and the actual successors of the ancient Pharisees are the Hasidim.* And if a literal obedience to the rabbinical usages, a proud contempt of the uncircumcised, larger phylacteries, a greater fringe to their talith, and fasting with much appearance of austerity, were, as they deem them, a sure passport to Abraham's bosom, then should we still wonder at their evil report among their brethren, who accuse them of revellings and indulgences not very consistent with the refined spirituality which they profess.

The language of the Ashcanazim of course depends upon the country whence they have each emigrated; but Judæo-Polish, Hebrew and Polish German are the most common among them. In personal appearance they are, as a general rule, far below the Sephardim. The countenance of

* This is particularly true as to monastic bodies. It is very interesting to observe, in the perusal of their different rules, how similar they were at first, and then to see the successive degeneracy of each body from its first principles giving birth to some new society, with nothing really new but its name.

the Prussian Jew is often very forbidding; but then we must bear in mind that poverty, fatigue, and the influence of a foreign climate do not present them to us in their best aspect. Their dress is less oriental and rich than that of their native brethren; but the chief difference consists in the cylindrical cap of dark brown fur which is almost universally worn over a white skullcap, which latter when exposed gives them a mean and wretched appearance. Some of them even wear a black napless hat, a remarkable object in Palestine; but these are by no means common. The women of this class of Jews are some of them very handsome; yet their beauty is of a softer and less commanding nature than that of the native Jewess. All of the women, both Sephardim and Ashcanazim, have a beautiful head-dress, consisting of a turban, presenting in front over the forehead a semi-circular appearance, which, being often of a gay colour (lilac and scarlet very commonly), contrasts well with the white drapery in which they infold themselves.*

* This moon-shaped turban has been supposed to be derived from the ancient worship of Diana (or the moon). It certainly resembles in form the head-dress of that goddess, as she appears in many statues of antiquity; the *Diana à la Bêche*, for instance, in the Louvre. Yet this alone would, of course, be quite insufficient.

Those Jewesses who come from the Austrian dominions and some particular parts of Germany, wear a strip of scarlet cloth or silk loosely folded over their forehead.

There is a third section of the Jews, which in Palestine are insignificant and few in number; but in Constantinople and the Crimea they are more numerous. These are called the Karaite Jews, and present many points of difference from their Israelitish brethren. The talith, or fringed-garment, is with them entirely white, save a small head-strip of crimson, on which is embroidered, in golden letters, some sentence from the law. They have separate synagogues and Rabbis, being, in fact, excommunicated by the other Jews, a course which they are not slow to adopt in return. The most interesting point in their customs, however, is their total rejection of tradition and the Talmud for the pure Scriptures of the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms, which, were they more numerous, would furnish reasonable ground for hopes of more numerous conversions than among those who make the Word of God, "now as of old," of none effect by their tradition. At Jerusalem there are a few of these, but their number is very small.

I attended repeatedly the services of the Jewish synagogue while in different parts of the Holy

Land. The chief Rabbi seems to take no part in the service, but occupies, with other great men, a place near to the cupboard where the Law is kept. The earlier part of the service, which is always in Hebrew, is taken by the "Hazan," or reader, who stands before a desk placed at the east end on the floor of the synagogue; the next part was the repetition of certain prayers, to which the assembly gave their "Amen" with fine unanimity. After this, in Hebrew, there was a hymn sung (the song of Moses over the fallen Egyptians), in sonorous unison, which produced a grand and simple effect. Then the roll of the Law, enclosed in a case which worked upon rollers, was taken with great ceremony out of a cupboard in the wall (generally towards the east of the synagogue), and paraded round the assembly, each pious Jew touching it with his fingers and then kissing them. The outer door was then thrown open for a moment, whereat were to be seen always a crowd of women pressing upon the threshold (which they never passed), to get a view of the precious roll.* Then this document (always in clearly written manuscript and on

* The women sit during the remainder of the service in a latticed gallery, or chamber, looking down into the assembly.

vellum) was taken up into the large pulpit in the centre of the synagogue, and the portion for the day was read by some person who had studied its accentuation, his eye being directed to the words by persons appointed, who held in turn a little silver stylus, with the figure of a hand at the end of it. The persons especially called up to the pulpit for the reading of the law are ordinarily three in number, and represent severally a Cohen, a Levite, and an Israelite. In one part of the service the Cohens found in the synagogue take their stand before the door of the Law, and, covering their faces with their talith, and extending their hands towards the congregation, deliver the priestly blessing.* These are denominated the sons of Aaron. Strangers are allowed to be present during the time of service, and, like the Jews themselves, keep the head covered; anything which they deem to be a smile is liable to the open and violent indignation of the assembly. During the celebration of service on the sabbath, the talith is worn thrown over the head and shoulders, with the

* The ceremonies with the talith and its fringe, at certain intervals in the prayers, and with the phylacteries when they are worn, are all detailed in the interesting work of my friend and fellow-traveller, Mr. Margoliouth, on "Modern Judaism," pp. 81, 82.

fringes at the corners within reach of the hands. This talith is a long white scarf of fine woollen material, having at both ends four or five black transverse stripes, and when, half concealing the faces of those proud-looking men, it is seen on the heads of the whole Israelitish assembly, its effect is in the highest degree picturesque. The length of the fringes to their talith is great, according to the height of their profession of religion. The phylactery is a small square box of black leather, divided internally into four parts, each containing a portion of the Law, written beautifully on parchment, and enclosed with many ceremonies.* These boxes are two in number, and one of them has the letter ש on one side and שׁ on the other. Both have two long stripes of leather attached to the bottom of each, by which the one is bound upon the front of the head between the eyes, and the other round the left arm. This is done out of a literal interpretation of the eighth verse of the sixth chapter of Deuteronomy, "Thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes, and thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house and on

* These are all fully described in Margoliouth's "Modern Judaism."

thy gates." The latter part of this verse is also literally complied with by all the Jews in Palestine. A little hole in the door-post, with a morsel of glass in front, preserves a fragment of parchment containing certain precepts of the Law. The value of the phylacteries increases with the eminence of their manufacturers' sanctity, and exalted and notorious piety possesses thus the means of turning its reputation for holiness into profit. These appendages are worn during the times of morning devotions, even in private, but not on the Sabbath.

The Jews have also adopted (as I supposed from the Mohammedans) the superstitious reverence for charms which characterises the votaries of most false religious systems. These are generally long strips of parchment scribbled over with scraps of nonsense and divers mysterious triangles and geometrical enigmas well calculated, like the horoscopes of our ancient astrologers, and the equally profound absurdities of modern almanac-makers, to produce the most extensive mental bewilderment among a people who exercise a credulous wonder more than the faculty of reason. This science (the produce whereof now, as ever, is a source of profit to the compilers of these anti-diabolical documents) has even given rise to collections of the most approved receipts for pro-

tection against the various evils to which flesh is heir, which collections have been published, and form the library of reference for the quacks and practices of these "curious arts." The charms themselves are placed in little boxes, which are often of silver or other precious material richly carved, and worn particularly by women and children, being fastened round the neck or placed near the heart. Thus we find this wonderful people "dwelling alone," and unnumbered among "the nations," superstitious, loving tradition better than the Holy Scripture, making broad their phylacteries, enlarging the borders of their garments, loving the chief seats in the synagogues, and to be called of men Rabbi; eating still with their loins girded the Lord's passover (the type of a spotless lamb of whose protecting blood they are ignorant), longing still for the coming of Messiah and the glory of his people Israel, priding themselves yet that they are "Abraham's seed," and eyeing with ill disguised scorn "the uncircumcised" and the "Gentile." Thus it is we find and recognise by name, by profession, and by practice, the "dispersed of Judah." On their future destiny, on the withering of their deep-rooted and proud unbelief, on the surpassing glory of their final triumph, who shall speak in terms precise and measured. The world may

stagger in wide convulsion, the elements of social discord may burst and overwhelm society, all that was sound in theory may tremble, yet still to me this ancient, hated, persecuted* people, sifted, yet guarded by Jehovah's hand, furnish a resting place for faith in God, where, wearied by a changing tottering earth, she may repose and find refreshment.

* As I walked one day down the streets of Jerusalem with a Jew, the Moslem children cast stones at him, and cried "Yehud!" "Yehud!" ("Jew!" "Jew!")

THE END.

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,, Sacred Annals	28
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,, Reformation	17
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Sydney Smith's Sermons	28
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,, (Isaac) Loyola	30
Tomline's Introduction to the Bible	30
Turner's Sacred History	31
Twelve Years Ago	31
Walker's Sacramenta Liturgica	31
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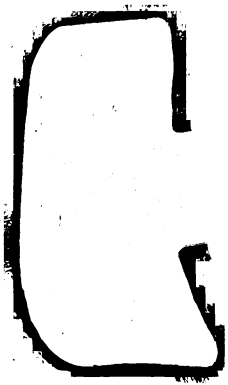
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